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ABSTRACT

This proceedings includes 62 papers on rural special education. Papers present promising practices for rural special education, current research, program descriptions, discussions of theory, and topics of timely concern. The papers are organized in order of presentation, and are categorized in a topical index under the following subjects: administration, at-risk students, collaborative models, early childhood, gifted, multicultural concerns, parents and families, professional development (including preservice and inservice education), technology (and distance education), transition, and other concerns (including low incidence populations and special agencies). An index of over 130 presenters and their affiliations is included. (SV)

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American Council on Rural Special Education

1997 Conference Proceedings

Promoting Progress in Times of Change: Rural Communities Leading the Way

March 26-29, 1997
San Antonio, Texas

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Edited by Diane Montgomery, Ph.D.
Oklahoma State University
ACRES Program Chair

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We would like to dedicate this 1997 Conference Proceedings *to the memory of our friend and colleague, an advocate for the mission of ACRES and children and youth with disabilities, someone we will miss:*

Robert Monahan
Landers University

His work in rural special education continues (see page 136)

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WELCOME!
to the
1997 Conference of the

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON RURAL SPECIAL EDUCATION

Introduction

This conference is a celebration of our 17th year! Nearing the eve of the 21st Century has brought us to recognize three major concepts in rural special education: (1) we have experienced considerable changes in special education, in the short-term as well as the long-term; (2) we represent and value the progress and quality of our efforts as rural constituents; and (3) there is strength in our skills at working together in rural communities consisting of professionals and families. These concepts formulate the foundation of our conference theme:

PROMOTING PROGRESS IN TIMES OF CHANGE: RURAL COMMUNITIES LEADING THE WAY!

This collection of over sixty (60) papers represents the newest and most innovative promising practices for rural special education, current research, contemporary discussions of theory, and topics of timely concern. The papers are organized in the order that they will be presented to serve as a convenient way to structure and plan your conference participation. We have included a Topical Index and an Author Index so that this important collection of work continues to serve as a reference for many in the years to come.

The Topical Index includes the following strands presented during these four days in San Antonio, Texas: Administration, At-Risk Students, Collaboration, Early Childhood, Gifted, Multicultural concerns, Parents and Families, Professional Development, Technology, Transition and Other concerns (including low incidence populations and special agencies). We have a list of over 130 authors who contributed to the success of this conference.

Our authors represent families and professionals from public and private schools, community agencies, colleges and universities, and private consulting individuals and agencies. We thank each of them for the contribution to the field of rural special education.

ACRES Program Chairperson,
Diane Montgomery

Thomas P. Lombardi, Ed.D.
Barbara L. Ludlow, Ed.D.
West Virginia University
Morgantown, WV 26506

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Introduction

Education in general, and special education in particular, represent a profession that is undergoing rapid and dramatic change. Although noone can predict with accuracy what special education will look like in the next century, a number of current trends provide clear implications for future policy and practice. Five broad social movements now underway will no doubt influence the shape of special education in years to come: demographic changes; social structure shifts; educational reforms; technology development; and, moral and ethical renewal. Such changes are already impacting the attitudes that people have toward individuals with disabilities, the nature of services provided by schools, and even basic understandings of the teaching-learning process. These trends offer a tantalizing glimpse into the program features, personnel roles, and controversial issues that special educators will likely experience after the year 2000.

Individualized Instruction

It is becoming quite clear that the principles of special education are shaping the future of all education. As Diane Ferguson points out in a recent Kappan article (Ferguson, 1995), there are three major directions which are taking place as our schools become more inclusive. The first is that schools are becoming less structured around students' abilities and more around students' diversities. Secondly, there is a shift from teachers being disseminators of content that students must learn toward approaches that emphasize the role of the individual learner in creating knowledge, competence, and the ability to pursue further learning. And, thirdly, the school's role is changing from providing educational services to providing *individualized* support for learning.

A recent article in the New York Times (Goodnough, 1997) lends support to this trend towards individualizing, not only instruction, but assessment as well. In Maplewood, New Jersey report cards use to be a simple affair: grades for each subject, with space for teachers' comments. Now all seven-year-olds will be receiving grades for not just math, language arts, social studies, and science, but for more than 150 skills in 10 subject areas: whether they understand fractions, use vivid language, and sing on pitch, for example. The new cards will even measure children's willingness to elaborate feelings, take risks, and accept responsibility for their behavior.

There is little doubt that early education, strongly advocated by special educators for many years, will continue to increase. Prevention of learning problems will become a major goal for these programs. A review of 36 studies of model demonstration projects and large-scale public school programs to examine the long-term effects of early childhood programs was completed by Steven (1995). He concluded that early childhood programs produced significant short-term benefits on intelligence quotients and important long-term benefits on school achievement. There clearly will be a growing need for special educators to function as early childhood intervention specialists.

Special education, in its broadest sense, may well become the solution to many of our school problems. Data collected during the Ravenswood Project (Lombardi, 1994), indicated less truancy, fewer behavior problems, and maintenance of grades for the *entire* high school population as regular and special education became merged. Cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and individualizing programs in many schools are no longer a special education domain but available to any student, including those considered at risk for failure.. And students without specific disabilities are learning to become helping, caring members of a school community. In addition, there is a real concern about the cost of maintaining both a general and a special education program structure. It is not unusual for special education costs to exceed 30% or more of a school system's budget. In the Boston public schools average class size could be reduced from 26 to 13 students if categorical dollars earmarked for special education could be directed to the general class environment (Odden, Monk, Yasser & Picus, 1995). Such a class size would go a long way in individualizing programs for each student.

As we enter the next century we envision many program and placement choices to meet individual needs, but they will not be separated by arbitrary structures. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the responsibility of general education, will become a large umbrella for *all* students who require some additional assistance to reach their learning potential . And, although we predict the continuum of service configurations will be maintained to assure individualization, the vast majority of students with special needs will be educated in general programs.

Personnel Preparation

As school structures serving students with special needs change, so too will the preservice and inservice programs that prepare educational personnel. Integrated education initiatives create a pressing demand for personnel trained in cross-disciplinary perspectives and collaboration skills. Some schools of education have begun to train general educators and special educators together to insure that all have the relevant knowledge and skills to work effectvely in inclusive classrooms (Sindelar, et al., 1995). To enable related service specialists to provide integrated therapy in classroom contexts and to work on transdisciplinary teams, university affiliated programs have implemented interdisciplinary training models for joint preparation of educators, social workers, speech/language clinicians, physical/occupational therapists and other personnel (Bricker & LaCroix, 1996). Such integrated training models require shifts in how academic units are organized, how individual faculty members are assigned and evaluated, and how learners are taught and assessed, shifts that will result in significant alterations in the structure and operation of teacher education programs in the next century.

The persistent shortage of appropriately trained special education personnel in many areas of the country has led to the development of a number of innovative personnel preparation programs that use unique delivery systems to recruit, train, and retain new special educators. Field-based models allow practicing, but uncertified teachers to complete certification requirements while they are employed, providing much-needed access to on-the-job training to rural special educators (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1991). Distance education options utilize a variety of telecommunications technologies to train preservice students and inservice educators who are unable to come to campus for training due to travel conditions or personal constraints (Howard, Ault, Knowlton, & Swall, 1992). And, alternative certification models bypass traditional teacher education programs as well as existing certification standards to train prospective teachers on the job, enticing college graduates and career changers to enter the education profession more easily. (Sindelar & Marks, 1993). All three of these options have been widely used in special education, and they have been especially effective in attracting new teacher candidates into low incidence disabilities and inner city special education programs. Although each of these innovations has both supporters and detractors, their success in increasing the pool of special education personnel and providing new employment opportunities for individuals from minority cultural groups and isolated rural areas guarantees that they not only will continue for many years to come, but even suggests that they may become the predominant mechanisms for preparing special educators in the future.

Calls for education reform have led to increasing interest in the identification of national standards for teachers, a change that would greatly impact the supply of special educators. As social changes have made populations increasingly mobile and teachers cross state lines in search of better salaries and working conditions, the need for consistency in training and licensure becomes more important, especially in an area with complex requirements such as special education (Lilly, 1992). The Council for Exceptional Children, in collaboration with the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, has published a set of professional standards to define the knowledge base for preparation programs and to specify a common set of competencies to inform certification requirements for special educators in each area of specialization (Council for Exceptional Children, 1995). The National Board for Professional Teachng Standards also has issued a draft document that outlines their version of competencies needed by educators across all age levels and roles. These developments point to the imminent achievement of some professional agreement on a core of knowledge and skills needed by special educators. National standards will promote the consistency in training across personnel preparation programs as well as in licensing across state educational agencies that will enhance the future delivery of school services to students with special needs.

Emerging Technologies

Advances in technology are producing major changes in education. The use of microcomputers, robotics, assistive-adaptive devices, and medical technology are altering curriculum objectives and instructional methods for all students. However the impact has been especially significant for students with special needs. Individuals with severe disabilities are being helped to respond to instruction and participation by means of response systems that rely on basic motions such as eye gazing, or by microswitches that operate with the press of a cheek or puff of breath. Voice activated computer programs are beginning to allow students with motor impairments to dictate written assignments and improve their academic performance. Children with visual disorders are using computer scanners and voice synthesizers to read aloud a page from any book. Students with specific learning disabilities are beginning to use word processors with grammar and spelling checks to demonstrate their comprehension of key ideas without interference from information-processing problems. And individuals with multiple disabilities are beginning to use robotics and remote control devices to operate a wide range of equipment in their environments for personal care, environmental control, employment opportunities, and total enhancement of their independence and self-esteem.

The use of multimedia instruction using videodiscs will be common place as we enter the new century. It will prove to be especially effective for students with social and behavioral problems. Wissick (1996) concludes that multimedia will provide teachers and students with a powerful tool to access a combination of media for enhancement of instructional events and learning. It can increase motivation, maintain attention, stimulate cognition and illustrate content and fact. As we enter the new century, multimedia will have a profound effect on how schools are structured and how we teach.

Perhaps the greatest current technological trend that will be common place in the future is distance education. Today, educators are using audioconferencing, computer networking, and television transmissions to expand the range of services and programs offered to students with special needs as well as to their teachers. This is especially true in states which have many rural communities. For instance, The University of Maine in Farmington has been making special education training available through the Interactive Television System of Maine's Education Network. Since course delivery began in 1993, average enrollment has been 100 students statewide (Gamble, 1995). As Ludlow (1995) notes "distance education is the future of rural special education". She states "by the turn of the century , telecommunications will connect every educator in every school, no matter how small, remote , or underfunded."

Policy Development

The history of education reflects a circular social change process in which experimental changes in practice on a small scale lead to adoption of these changes as policy, which in turn lead to broader changes policy implications for practice on a wide scale. Although advances in general education and advances in special education have often proceeded along parallel tracks, most recently education reformers on both sides have called for a single system of schooling that meets the needs of all children. The success of early education efforts in increasing the achievement of children with disabilities, delays and risk conditions has generated interest in providing such support services to more families facing the challenges of childrearing in today's world. And, the recognition that careful transition planning is critical to the adult outcomes of students with special needs is pointing to the need for school-to-work initiatives for all students.

Visionaries have long recognized that the fundamental tenets of special education theory and practice could easily be applied to improve schools in ways that would benefit all students. Special education practices such as individualized instruction and assessment, family-professional collaboration, and student support networks, have focused new interest in creating schools that promote equal educational opportunity and maximize the individual potential of *all* students (Gartner & Lipsky, 1990). The inclusion movement itself is not so much about providing access to regular classrooms for students with disabilities, as it is about creating schools and programs where all children can belong, learn and contribute (Stainback & Stainback, 1990). Thomas Skrtic, in his thought-provoking book, *Disability and Democracy* (1995), argued that the aims of a democratic society in the postmodern age are best accomplished by a school system that celebrates population diversity, promotes individual accomplishment and group cooperation, and develops skills for lifelong learning. A unified system of education that provides special services to every child based on identified needs rather than disability categories, in the context of group activities and relationships, will be a defining characteristic of schools in the next century.

It is now clear that society can gain many advantages by providing broader social supports to children and their families, similar to those that have been advocated and even provided by sceial educators for many years. A number of organizations have examined the challenges to child development and family functioning presented by poverty, homelessness, cultural differences, and home and community violence and called for widespread prevention and intervention efforts (Children's Defense Fund, 1994). Early intervention programs, now available in most areas of the country as a result of federal and state legislation, have offered comprehensive interdisciplinary services to young children with special needs along with a variety of social supports for their families for over a decade (Simeonsson, 1994). The recent America 2000 initiative set national goals for insuring school success for all children that will necessitate the application of an early intervention model to a broader range of children and families (Reich, 1992). These developments, along with a growing awareness that schools are the center of community life (especially in rural areas) will lead public school systems to offer a wider range of educational, social, and health services to individuals across the lifespan in the next century.

Assisting students to make a successful transition from school to adult life is an issue that has long challenged special educators, but now confronts general educators as well. Despite federal legislation mandating transition planning and programming for students with special needs since 1983, many young people with disabilities make a poor adjustment to adult life (Sitlington, Frank, & Cardon, 1992). As society grows ever more complex and the demands of adult life increase, schools will feel growing pressure to insure that *all* students will succeed after school. Already some states, recognizing the need for transition services for all high school students, have established school-to-work initiatives and school-business partnerships. Transition models developed by special educators will serve to inform and improve the transition options available for every student and become commonplace activites in the schools of the future.

Diverse Environments

The special needs of students with disabilities in rural and urban school programs as well as those in correctional facilities present education professionals with many pressing concerns. Schools in rural areas experience the constraints of difficulties in providing transportation, problems in recruiting and retaining special educators, and limited availability of special services (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1991), but they also offer advantages of community partnerships, parent involvement, and professional collaboration. Urban schools, especially in inner-city areas, face personnel shortages and turnover as well, but they also address issues such as as cultural differences and bilingual learning (Rousseau & Davenport, 1993). The growing number of youth in correctional facilities need educational programming that develops social and vocational as well as academic abilities to assist them in adapting to society's demands. Efforts to address rural, urban, and correctional special education issues will become the focus of intervention research, policy development, model program design, and public funding initiatives in the next century.

Conclusion

Special education, focusing interest and effort on the most vulnerable citizens, is a microcosm of society as a whole and even a harbinger of broader social change. Consequently, the policies and practices that are hot topics for today's special educators soon become key components of tomorrow's society. Major federal legislation, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, by prohibiting discrimination and segregation and championing integration and inclusion, have profoundly affected how today's schools and community agencies provide education and other social services to children and adults with disabilities. Whatever the future holds for students with special needs, special educators, and agencies that provide special education services, the outcomes will no doubt have fundamental implications for the meaning of education as well as the purpose of schooling in a democratic system, a changing economy, and a global world order in the early years of the 21st century.

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Robert C. Steinmiller, Ph.D.
Director of Retention
Georgine G. Steinmiller, Ph.D.
Professor of Special Education
Henderson State University
Arkadelphia, Arkansas

HOW TO RETAIN RURAL STUDENTS WHO ARE ACCEPTED INTO COLLEGE ON A CONDITIONAL BASIS

Retention of students in higher education is an important concern for all parties. Enrollment management concerns and questions of accountability have motivated interest and the development of programs to assist students in making the most of their college experience. Student who are identified as most at risk but who are still admitted to higher education find themselves admitted conditionally. Often students coming into higher education from rural school setting find themselves in this conditional situation.

LITERATURE

Hossler and Bean (1990) point out how the first contact new students have with the university is the admissions, orientation and academic advising components of the institution. Kennedy *et al* (1995) explored freshmen perspective on social and academic issues and observed the importance of student characteristics and predispositions. Tinto (1975 & 1987) looked at student background as an important variable in developing models of retention. Pascarella & Terenzini (1995) explored how students academic and nonacademic experiences are inseparable variables to note when addressing student success.

Conklin (1995) explored the importance of early identification in working with high-risk college students. Baker & Schultz (1993) researched how at-risk first semester college students are affected by low initial expectations, disillusionment and poor initial adjustment. Grupe & Maples (1992) looked at the preadmission advising for incoming college students as an important way of identifying needs of students.

Bean (1990) noted student retention basics: (1) needs and mission of student and institution must match , (2) courses offerings must facilitate student needs, (3) students benefit from institutional simplicity, (4) students need meaningful academic support, (5) students need support from the higher educational social environment to facilitate student transition into college.

Pascerella (1985) identified five variables of influence regarding students in higher education: (1) background and precollege characteristics of students, (2) structural and organizational features, (3) higher educational environment, (4) student interactions with social environment, and (5) resulting quality of student effort. A student's academic self concept provides a focus for attention (Pascerella & Terenzini, 1991). Frost (1989) discussed the importance of encouraging active involvement by new freshmen in the learning and advising process.

TRANSITION INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admissions models range from open admissions to highly selective. Some students will have difficulty in making the transition into higher education and need support. Admissions standards indicate who those students might be, and often the institution will take a risk and admit students on a conditional status with the thought that success is possible but not necessarily probable. Intrusive advising is assertive proactive academic counseling that probes probable areas of concern and works directly with students on areas of concern.

A SUPPORT MODEL

Admissions standards indicate which students are admitted unconditionally, conditionally, or not admitted. Unconditionally admitted students must meet the basic academic standards of the university. Conditional students generally have a placement test concern in English, mathematics, reading or an overall composit low score. Conditionally admitted students are on a soft form of probation that requires maintaining basic freshman academic standards to have the condition removed after the first full semester of fifteen hours. Some of the marginal conditional students with the lowest placement scores are further reviewed for admissions. These students may have been underprepared by a district that was not able to fully offer what the student needed to compete with other students. Some of the most at-risk admitted conditional students may then be admitted under special requirements. Those at-risk conditional students are the focus of this model.

At-risk conditional students are screened by a Credentials committee chaired by the university registrar. Supplemental materials are requested to provide evidence to indicate success probability. Letters of reference are requested, an analysis of the high school transcript is made, and a personal hand written essay indicating the students goals in higher education are requested. Students who are admitted through the Credentials committee are then assigned to an advisor specialist who serves as the initial and primary advisor for the full at-risk conditionally admitted student population.

This advisor writes to the conditional students and informs them of their need to work closely with the advisor. A file is established regarding the student and the supplemental materials are incorporated into the students' files.

An initial conference is made before the student registers as a new student. A review of the high school transcript is made with the student in conference. Each course that serves as a foundation for college work is reviewed. Often the advisor contacts the home high school of the student and further explores the background of the students. The advisor goes beyond the obvious information in working with the high school counselors and teachers to set up a program for college success.

Conditional students come to the advisor for their first semester freshman schedule. The advisor assures the student that support is present and that tutorial support is available. The conditional student is admitted on that status because remedial education is required. The freshman schedule must meet the requirements of the various remedial departments. English, mathematics and reading courses are usually the heard of the conditional first semester student. Additionally, conditional students are requested to take a freshman introduction and orientation seminar to facilitate transition to higher education.

Advising for this population involves maintaining close contact between the student and the advisor and maintaining a counseling file. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and making use of advising suggestions. Students make weekly progress reports that encourage the students to talk to their teachers about expectations and how to make best use of the learning situation. Self-reporting helps connect students with their perceptions and the realities of the college setting. Six weeks reports are used in student conference to see how close the self reporting and the teacher reports are reflected. The advisor works closely with faculty to monitor attendance and academic progress. Student are also encouraged to make use of the University counseling center and tutorial assistance. Final analysis of transcript allows the student and the advisor to see how successful the student has been at making the best use of the academic support provided. Finally, the conditional student is encouraged to explore outcomesof the higher education, and explore appropriate majors as the student moves from general education into upper class coursework. The student is asked to visit various advisors in various majors to make the transition from the initial at-risk advisor to a permanent one. Often coadvising works until the student has made complete transition into higher education.

RESULTS

Review of the transcripts of conditionally admitted students since the Credentials committee has been formed finds the following information. The policy began in 1992 at a four year comprehensive university with an approximate enrollment of 3500 and an approximate freshman class of 800 and a retention rate of approximately 60% freshman to sophomore. Thirty-eight students are identified as conditionally admitted through the credentials committee and required to work with the support program. Twenty-six were still enrolled in the fall of 1996, and only three had been suspended. Eighteen had a grade point above a 2.00 with three above a 3.00. Four were seniors on credits; seven were juniors; twelve were sophomores and fifteen were freshmen. In terms of population, five were from cities of 175, 000, two from 60,000, five from 32,000 to 23,000, two from 14,000 and twelve from 10,000, two from 4,000 and ten below 1,000. With thirty-three students going beyond two semesters, 87% persisted beyond the first year.

CONCLUSION

At-risk new students need academic assistance to aid them in the transition from high school to college. With focused attention on this population, success occurred where success was not otherwise predicted. Ofter underprepared students need to develop skills and confidence through a structured program such as the one discussed above.

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Barbara Keefe
The Education Network
University of Maine System
Augusta, Maine 04330

ATM: RESTRUCTING LEARNING FOR DEAF STUDENTS

PRESENTERS: Barbara Keefe, The Education Network
David Stockford, The Maine Department of Education

Abstract

The Governor Baxter School for the Deaf in collaboration with the Department of Education and the University of Maine system has embarked on an exciting new technology initiative. The school is one of six pilot sites chosen by NYNEX to showcase asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) technology. The other five sites are Presque Isle, Halldale and Gorham High Schools, the college of education at the University of Maine at Orono and the state local area network. This technology, which has the potential to carry two way full motion video is especially beneficial to a deaf and hard of hearing population whose language is primarily visual. Critical issues concerning the establishment of this state of art technology will be examined from a perspective of a pilot site.

Introduction

Distance learning and telecommunications technologies offer much promise to schools for the deaf to alter the way teaching and learning occurs. There is evidence that successful teaching at a distance is linked to creative use of human resources and the right technology mix. (Keefe 1995) Insuring both these possibilities is imperative if ATM technology is to succeed in an education environment.

Background

Maine is pioneering the use of second generation ATM technology. North Carolina's ATM technology has been in place since 1994. But technologies change at an accelerated rate and ATM technology has matured significantly. Maine will benefit from this maturation. The Department of Education(DOE) has a strong commitment to provide a comprehensive educational broadband fiber-optic ATM network to every high school that will deliver voice, data, and dynamic two way interactive full motion video. (MaineOnline 1996). With support from a 15 million dollar bond issue ATM equipment will be purchased for high schools. The equipment will include routers, switches, cameras, TV monitors and VCRs. The ATM

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switch network will be installed by NYNEX at no cost to the rate payer. An Augusta ATM switch will serve the needs of the six pilot sites.

Description of the Technology

What is asynchronous transfer mode? Basically, ATM is a network connection that allows high bandwidth transmission of data, voice and video. The benefits of the technology are: high speed, flexibility, compatibility and world wide standards.(Dynan 1996) The high speed capability at 45MB and 155MB allows for high quality interactive video. To support the ATM network Maine DOE has contracted services from STARVISION, an affiliate of the Newbridge Company, provider of the ATM black box, to provide a sophisticated and simple calendaring component to program for the distance education component. This distance education system offers full motion multi media conferencing between schools, a high speed electronic whiteboard, which allows you to share information with students at distant schools, local and remote control of video cameras, and an integrated scheduling system. This technology is very new and Maine's six pilot sites are testing the technological reliability of the network and equipment at the same time they are programming for its use.

Maximizing Opportunities for Accessible Programming

How can Maine's ATM pilot impact and benefit deaf and hard of hearing students? Deaf and hard of hearing people have been cautious of new technology (Baker 1995). This caution has some justification historically. Alexander Graham Bell dramatically altered the pattern of life for deaf individuals with the invention of the telephone. Isolation and separation of the deaf from the broader culture was the consequence of Bell's heralded new technology. The new communication link for the hearing world was profound and negative on the deaf community and its impact continued for decades until the advent of the TTY. The advantage of the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf's inclusion as a pilot site for programming ATM technology is the opportunity to sit at the table as part of the development team. This "value currency" is real. During a recent training session for StarED, the calendaring component of the distant education system, GBSD representatives raised the issue of captioning and how important it was to a deaf and hard of hearing population. That particular functionality had not been added to the MPEG 2 card that provides video. Two days following the training session the account manager for the Newbridge company responded to the staff that closed captioning would be added to the functionality of the video card. The dynamic dialogue related to user support for everyone advances the need for inclusive features being built into the product's functional design.

Programming

The Governor Baxter School for the Deaf delivers an American Sign Language class statewide to five high schools over the Education Network of Maine as a foreign language. Currently the deaf instructor travels to a university campus to teach the class. In September the class will broadcast from the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf. Maine recognizes ASL as a foreign language. The opportunity to deliver the ASL class to more than one high school in a two way video interactive environment is very exciting and will dramatically enhance the quality of student learning. Plans to teach American Sign Language to three pilot sites focusing on cultural diversity is underway. During the initial phase of the project only a point to point connection is possible. Phase two which is targeted for September 1997 a multi point connection will permit a maximum of four schools to interact.

Additional academic programming will revolve around delivering content in the area of Maine Studies. Mackworth Island was the summer residence of Percival Baxter, a former Governor of Maine and a generous benefactor to the state. The state school for the deaf is located on this beautiful island. Mini curriculum units related to Governor Baxter's legacy to the people of Maine will be developed by students at the school. Science is another content area where ideas can be exchanged among students at the pilot sites and GBSD students will have something unique to contribute about island living. Programming collaborative work with public school students in foreign language, history and science deaf students can assume leadership roles and develop pride in sharing their language and extraordinary campus island.

Challenges

The monthly service charge of $2000 to access ATM technology by NYNEX could be a major concern for many school boards. NYNEX's flat rate service charge could be a serious challenge to expanding the network if cost benefits to school districts are not proven in a reasonable amount of time. The ATM technology and the accompanying tools to carry programming are new. There will be necessary product adjustments for the education environment. Those adjustments need to happen with alacrity. Teachers expect technology to be reliable and dependable for instruction. Patience among teachers will be limited. ATM technology has no track record in Maine; time will test the assumption that this technology is revolutionary. The "Yankee" mentality is brutal and quick to judge exaggeration. For deaf and hard of hearing students the program applications of ATM technology can be profound. For the first time in history deaf students have access to a critical mass of peers via a network that permits communication using American Sign Language. This is revolutionary. The need to insure ways of manipulating information to acquire and test new ideas is essential to creating a new structure of learning for deaf students.

The robustness of the network will provide new opportunities for the use of high quality multi media applications (Scott 1996). The greatest challenge before us is to capitalize upon the opportunity to use this very visual medium and not settle for less than revolutionary outcomes or forfeit the potential of utilizing the technology to dramatically improve student learning for deaf students, not only in Maine but throughout the country.

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Debbie House & Patricia Morrison
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078

THE WHEEL OF OPTIONS
BRINGING ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATIONS INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

The school principal assumes responsibility for all aspects of school life and this all encompassing role has undergone many recent and dramatic changes in the last decade and a half (Frase & Melton, 1992). A superficial review of the literature reveals that considerable debate exists regarding those changes and the direction they should continue to take (Richardson, Lane, & Flanigan, 1996). Historically all that was required of a school principal was the ability to be a strong disciplinarian, possess a working knowledge of basic learning theories, and be a respected member of the community. Principals often spoke without hesitation, and his word was law. Dad and Mom told their children to go to school and to "mind the teacher" and the students listened and learned and behaved themselves. Those students that did not follow these rules did not come back to school. Teachers if unhappy with their responsibilities expressed little, if any, discontent. Parents left educational decisions, small or large, up to the schools. The courts rarely got involved with the school and left the "educational professionals" to make nearly all the decisions. Everything progressed along fairly well with little resistance (Kowalski, T., Reitzug, U., &McDaniel, P., 1992).

Somewhere within this nearly perfect scenario; however, things began to change. Maybe it was due to the change in political climate brought on by the Civil Rights Movement of the 60's or the enactment of federal mandates calling for the all encompassing education of students with disabilities that came about in the 70's or maybe the tightening of federal funding and demand for strict accountability that occurred in the 80's. Most likely it was a combination of these factors, as well as, many others that have permeated American society this century. Regardless of the reasons, just as society in general has become more complex so has the role of the school principal. Not only is the principal expected to control discipline issues, supervise the learning process, and be a respected community member, but he or she is also expected to deal with a variety of convoluted issues where every issue is comprised of a multitude of complex legal concerns. A student is no longer just a student. A principal must now be concerned with whether or not that student is a student with a disability, or a student of minority status, or a student with multicultural concerns; not to mention the fact that the constitutional rights of students seem to increase on an almost daily basis. Then there are issues to contend with that involve teachers and staff. There are different concerns if a teacher has tenure within the district compared to a novice teacher. There are also issues that involve, among many other contingencies, a teacher's minority status, teacher evaluations, letters of recommendation, gender, and educational level. Intertwined in all this are concerns involving allegations of sexual harassment, racial discrimination, and a violation of constitutional rights as well as a plethora of other concerns involving school staff and personnel.

The dawning years of the 90's have ushered in yet another capacious concern for principals--the philosophy of inclusive learning for students with disabilities. Currently with the controversial philosophical construct of inclusion implemented within many of our nation's school districts the role of the principal has once again undergone a metamorphosis of incredible proportions. Where once upon a time, many principals could segregate students with disabilities into separate classrooms and overtly send the message to special educators: "Do whatever it takes to keep them out of the way". Not all principals were so exclusive, though. There were those principals that took a slightly more embracive approach concerning those students with special needs housed within their building. The attitude of these principals was usually more like that of a relative coming to visit small children. These administrators would show concern for the students when it was convenient, visit and interact with them a while, but when the interaction grew tiresome they could always find an excuse to exit quickly. The implementation of inclusion has forced the principal into a much more active role concerning the education of all students. Not only is the principal dealing more actively with the student with the disability and the special educator, but also the general classroom teacher(s), the general classroom students, aides, specialists and parents.

Now because inclusion is placing more and more demands on classroom teachers, of all subjects and at all levels, the role of an effective school manager is even more critical. Yet amidst all the changes surrounding the role of the school principal one thing has remained constant--the administrative evaluation form. It is often stated that principal evaluation forms are antiquated and include little incentive for positive growth and change. Administrator evaluations have attempted to change as the administrative role has changed. However, what has resulted is a "canned" checklist of factors with the repercussions the same for those administrators doing a great job or a totally inadequate job--little if any notice (Murphy & Pimentel, 1996).

Overall, educational researchers have identified the principal as the critical element in a school's success. Principals, as the first line of administration in school districts, serve as the critical link between the community and educators. The principal for the next millennium is challenged to facilitate an administrative vision that balances the need for order in the schools with the need to respect the educational concerns of students, teachers, and parents. The teachers for the next millennium are challenged to develop and implement a progressive, well-conceived, results-based evaluation. If we have learned anything about education over this past thousand year period, we have learned that reform cannot be mandated from on high. Genuine change can happen only at the school site. Education's mission--to ensure that all students acquire the knowledge, skills, and work habits required for a secure and productive future--is pursued most directly at the school level. Is there anyone who doesn't believe that the teachers are one of the best sources of knowledge concerning the principal's professional performance (Richardson, Lane, & Flanigan, 1996)?

The principal of the next millennium can best be termed 'leadership challenged". What should be the characteristics of those principals that bring effective productive schools into the next millennium? With school violence increasing in both occurrence and severity, what expectations should we place on the role of the principal? With learners of diverse ability levels becoming common place in general education classrooms what should be asked of the school principal? So what are the added skills that should be required of all effective school leaders? How should these skills be assessed? How should incentive for change be handled? Does inclusion require a principal to have a more in-depth knowledge of various learning styles and disabilities? Does the principal need to possess knowledge of a multiplicity of teaching techniques? Does an effective principal need to have the training to restrain violent students? Should more emphasis be placed on getting administrators out of the office and into the classroom--on a teaching level, not just as an observer? Should educators perhaps begin to look for a more open and shared leadership? Should parents, teachers, and students begin to have more of a controlling interest in the day to day leadership of our nation's schools? Should the focus be shifted from that of pleasing central office personnel to pleasing the very customers that educators serve?

Perhaps what is needed is a personally designed evaluation for each principal based on the needs of that building's teachers, students, parents, and administrator. Perhaps the goal for administrator evaluation reform should be to construct a system that does more than evaluate, but one that informs, diagnoses, and prescribes.

Some studies have been conducted that investigate the question of effective school leadership and the evaluations of these individuals. Richardson, Lane, & Flanigan (1996) studied the similarities between effective business managers and effective principals. These researchers found that, overall, the similarities between business employees' perceptions of managers and teachers' perceptions of principals' characteristics were striking. The implication for principals is clear: The better a principal understands teachers' expectations, the more likely a principal can fulfill the expectations of the role.

Murphy & Pimentel (1999) investigated a results-based evaluation and profit-sharing system now in use in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina. They found that inquiry, innovation, entrepreneurship, risk-taking, and autonomy for school staffs--all set against a backdrop of high standards--are the keys to creating a system full of creative ferment.

The proper training and evaluation of our schools' principals is of critical concern particularly since valid and reliable data indicates the strong correlation between effective leadership and student achievement. New principal evaluation systems also hold important implications--and great promise--for teachers. They point the way for pay raises based on performance rather than tenure, for "bonus checks" for outstanding performance, for greater incentives for continuing education programs. Newly designed principal evaluation systems also hold important implications for students and parents. They can lay the groundwork for regularly and accurately informing the public about the state of the schools, for showing the door to teachers unsuited to the role of educator despite their years of seniority and tenure, and for ushering a new era of performance accountability as it relates to effective teaching.

This current period of history we reside in has been termed "the age of information". Now more than ever educators need to take that phrase to heart and think long and hard about updating the current administrator evaluation form and designing an evaluation system that is based on current, relevant information about the individual's performance as educational leader. Educators need to think about designing a system that has swift and effective repercussions for poor performances and swift rewards for excellence. Educators need to think about designing an evaluation system that not only aggrandizes areas of strength, but also identifies and remediates areas of weakness.

As every community and school within America looks to achieve the tasks set before them in the Education Goals of 2000 they should look hard and long at their administrator evaluation forms. Administrator evaluations, though not very glamorous, is an important aspect of education that can be used to continually improve the leadership performance of one of the most important individuals in our country's growth and development--the school administrator.

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Rhoda P. Erhardt, MS, OTR, FAOTA
Private Practice
Maplewood, Minnesota

CONSULTATION: ADAPTING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FOR RURAL ENVIRONMENTS

The purpose of this presentation is to offer related service professionals in rural communities the opportunity to share their experiences as consultants to school systems and families. Related services to children with special needs were first mandated with the passage in 1975 of Public Law 94-142, the Education of the Handicapped Act, and were further clarified by Education of the Handicapped Amendments P.L. 99-457, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), P.L. 101-476. Related service professionals, which include, but are not limited to, occupational, physical, and speech therapists, need to work collaboratively and effectively with educators, administrators, and parents of children who require therapy services.

The consultative approach, a currently hot issue for school-based therapists, has proved to be an appropriate cost-effective method of delivering therapies in inclusive settings. Consultation skills are particularly important in rural areas dealing with problems such as low incidence handicaps and shortages of trained personnel, where direct, individualized services cannot be provided on a frequent or regular basis.

Integrated therapy is an important component of inclusion, which is intended to facilitate the future success of children with disabilities by educating them in the least restrictive environments. Services are provided in natural settings and always within the contexts where activities would ordinarily be performed. Practicing skills in naturally occurring situations attaches meaning, improves motivation, and increases the number of opportunities for learning, according to current theories of motor control and motor learning. In addition to classrooms, these settings may include lunchrooms, bathrooms, hallways, playgrounds, and buses.

A consultant is an objective, skilled professional, who provides specialized knowledge to empower individuals toward independent problem-solving and decision-making. The role of the related service consultant is to evaluate existing needs, determine available resources, formulate and communicate recommendations, participate in plans for intervention, and, if appropriate, help with implementation within appropriate environmental contexts. Consultative services must also consider several dimensions related to service delivery: location (in/out of class), involvement of others (children/adults), context of therapy (remedial/within classroom routines), intervention style (responsive/directive), goal functionality (foundational/behavioral), and therapist's role (hands-on/observational).

The consultation process itself is a fascinating one. Not only must activities, materials, and equipment be adapted to the ongoing needs of programs and students, but personal and professional communication skills must be adapted to the consultee's perception of current needs, as well. The consultee may be an individual (therapist, teacher, parent) or a team (professionals, paraprofessionals, lay persons) or an agency (early childhood program, special education cooperative, post-secondary education), requesting program rather than client consultation.

Effective practice in today's health, educational, and business climate depends on professional competencies developed in reference to organizational characteristics and social systems, with a sensitive awareness of different ages, genders, lifestyles, and cultural perspectives.

Participants will be given information that will help clarify the consultation role and process, leading to discussion of practical techniques and examples of effective problem-solving strategies for adapting this method of service delivery to specific organizational and geographical systems.

This information will emphasize the implications for clinical practice in rural areas, with discussion designed to motivate participants to explore the topics further.

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Margie Crutchfield
National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education
Reston, Virginia

NCPSE--WE HAVE THE ANSWERS

The National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (NCPSE) is a federally funded project operated by The Council for Exceptional Children. The mission of NCPSE is to collect, analyze, and disseminate information that will guide efforts to increase the adequacy of the available supply of qualified, diverse special education and related services professionals. NCPSE has an extensive publications program, a toll-free telephone service, a web site that includes many of its products (http://www.cec.sped.org/ncpse.htm), and a professional staff that collaborates with colleagues across the country in the preparation of publications, products, and presentations.

Shortages of qualified special education and related services professionals to serve children with disabilities in rural areas are well-known and expected to continue in the future. NCPSE has information and resources on issues affecting the supply, demand, need, recruitment, training, and retention of special educators and related services professionals in rural settings. This session provides data on the supply and demand of special education teachers, information on US Department of Education training grants to prepare teachers in rural areas, and information on how personnel at local education agencies, state education agencies, and universities and the public can access and utilize this information.

Supply and Demand Data

It is not easy to find pertinent information on the supply, demand, and need of special education teachers in rural areas. This is made even more difficult by the diverse definitions of "rural" and by the difficulty of pulling data on special education out of the data on general education. However, data from the National Center for Education *Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94* that provide information on rural special educators and the difficulty in filling vacant positions will be shared (See Tables 1 and 2). This will include information on the number of special education teachers in rural areas and their responses to the following questions: (1) likelihood of becoming a teacher again; (2) level of satisfaction with various aspects of their working condition; and (3) type of certification they hold in their main teaching assignment field.

Division of Research to Practice Training Grants

The Division of Research to Practice (formerly called the Division of Personnel Preparation), Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education, appropriates funds to institutions of higher education and other appropriate nonprofit agencies to assist them in training personnel for careers in special education, related services, and early intervention services. NCPSE maintains a database of all these grants awarded in 1995 and 1996. (Some of the information on the "total amount awarded" for 1996 is currently incomplete but will be added to the database soon.) A list of all those grants that have "rural" as one of their major components will be provided. A summary of this information can be found in Table 3 (1995) and Table 4

(1996). In 1995, 124 grants were awarded to 72 grantees. These grants provided training for 2,557 students. $4,845,564 was provided as stipends to students. The total amount awarded was $12,385,000. In 1996, 98 grants were awarded to 62 grantees. Training was provided to 1,727 students and students received $3,892,203 in stipends. Data on the "total amount awarded" is incomplete.

Other NCPSE Databases

1. NCPSE maintains a database of all the colleges and universities that have preparation programs for special education and many of the related services. This information is available through several means. State sheets and lists by many disability categories are available in hard copy and at our web site. Specialized searches of the database are also available by request. It is also possible to create a file of addresses of all or selected programs that can be used to prepare mailing labels for those doing research or sending out other surveys. NCPSE is currently updating this database and is including information on distance education options and/or other nontraditional options of course delivery. A complete update of the database should be completed by Summer 1997.

2. NCPSE maintains a database of literature pertinent to issues that affect the training, employment, supply, demand, retention and attrition of special education and related services personnel. This database includes journal literature, conference proceedings, brochures, reports, and other selected printed documents. NCPSE staff can search the database on such topics as recruitment and retention strategies, alternative certification programs, personnel shortages and any others. Staff are more than happy to make specialized searches.

3. NCPSE maintains a database of financial aid programs, scholarships and grants for students interested in careers in special education or one of the related services. This database serves as a the basis for our preprinted products, all of which can be found at our web site. This database is updated and each item in the list is verified annually.

For further information contact:

The National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191-1589
1-800-641-7824
703-264-9476 (Voice)
703-264-9480 (TTY)
703-264-1637 (FAX)
E-mail: ncpse@cec.sped.org
URL: http://www.cec.sped.org/ncpse.htm

Table 1

Of Schools That Could Have Had Vacancies In Various Teaching Fields, Percentage With Vacancies In Those Fields By Selected School Characteristics: 1993-94

Type of School	General Elementary	Special Education	English	Math	Physical Sciences	Biology or Life Sciences	ESL or Bilingual Education
PUBLIC							
Central City	89.3	59.6	39.3	44.4	35.4	32.4	36.2
Urban fringe/large town	87.0	52.8	44.2	45.8	39.4	31.7	28.2
Rural/small town	82.3	51.9	39.9	40.5	30.1	26.3	21.2
PRIVATE							
Central City	92.1	43.7	50.4	52.0	46.1	45.1	9.8
Urban fringe/large town	87.5	42.6	40.9	42.1	41.4	35.3	7.3
Rural/small town	90.0	34.0	40.2	38.7	37.2	36.5	16.9

Source: Henke, R. R., Choy, S. P., Geis, S., & Brougham, S. P. (1996). *Schools and Staffing in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1993-94.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Table 2

Percentage Of Schools With Vacancies In Various Teaching Fields That Found It Very Difficult Or Impossible To Fill The Vacancies, By Selected School Characteristics: 1993-94

Type of School	General Elementary	Special Education	English	Math	Physical Sciences	Biology or Life Sciences	ESL or Bilingual Education
PUBLIC							
Central City	3.5	23.9	3.4	23.0	25.6	25.9	33.1
Urban fringe/large town	1.2	18.3	4.0	9.2	16.3	12.5	16.9
Rural/small town	2.0	19.4	3.7	12.7	13.9	11.3	30.0
PRIVATE							
Central City	3.6	24.8	3.6	18.8	21.1	17.5	--
Urban fringe/large town	2.3	13.4	2.5	13.8	16.8	15.3	--
Rural/small town	4.4	10.7	6.5	9.8	27.5	22.8	--

Note: -- Too few cases for a reliable estimate.

Source: Henke, R. R., Choy, S. P., Geis, S., & Brougham, S. P. (1996). *Schools and Staffing in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1993-94.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Table 3

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)

Research to Practice Division (formerly Division of Personnel Preparation) Grants

Projects Related to Rural Areas for Fiscal Year 1995

State	Grants FY95	Grantees FY95	Persons to be Trained FY95	Stipend FY95	Total Awarded FY95
Alaska	2	2	10	$46,861	$230,166
Alabama	5	3	60	$205,615	$472,975
Arkansas	2	2	5	$46,575	$265,929
Arizona	3	2	70	$122,066	$354,671
California	7	3	173	$208,055	$771,011
Colorado	5	2	527	$153,244	$505,166
Connecticut	1	1	11	$0	$105,132
Florida	2	2	43	$125,400	$241,384
Georgia	2	2	30	$77,572	$178,064
Idaho	4	2	52	$222,713	$418,477
Illinois	1	1	12	$14,867	$78,464
Indiana	1	1	5	$82,250	$87,087
Kansas	3	1	48	$77,380	$308,289
Kentucky	6	2	119	$305,282	$604,755
Louisiana	2	2	40	$33,470	$169,948
Maine	2	1	38	$65,280	$195,114
Michigan	1	1	12	$42,586	$99,391
Minnesota	1	1	200	$17,500	$95,908
Missouri	3	2	74	$187,541	$315,697
Montana	3	2	26	$22,100	$291,904
Nebraska	2	2	8	$47,800	$272,251
Nevada	2	1	80	$32,865	$167,287
New Hampshire	1	1	3	$41,000	$69,645
New Mexico	5	2	77	$178,600	$539,678
New York	2	2	15	$125,000	$150,032
North Carolina	5	4	102	$186,095	$425,286
North Dakota	2	2	28	$46,360	$211,098
Ohio	1	1	5	$42,183	$112,709
Oklahoma	1	1	26	$47,499	$125,734
Oregon	5	2	56	$198,732	$531,895
Pennsylvania	6	3	42	$310,442	$624,490
Puerto Rico	1	1	32	$59,551	$87,811
South Carolina	2	1	31	$74,640	$163,086
Tennessee	1	1	15	$24,570	$50,159
Texas	11	6	134	$522,930	$1,176,204
Utah	7	2	77	$217,470	$591,564
Vermont	4	1	119	$158,630	$406,526
Virginia	2	1	20	$182,300	$246,245
West Virginia	6	2	97	$201,750	$455,328
Wisconsin	2	1	35	$90,790	$188,440
TOTALS	**124**	**72**	**2557**	**$4,845,564**	**$12,385,000**

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Table 4

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
Research to Practice Division (formerly Division of Personnel Preparation) Grants
Projects Related to Rural Areas for Fiscal Year 1996

State	Grants FY96	Grantees FY96	Persons to be Trained FY96	Stipend FY96	Total Awarded FY96*
Alaska	2	2	10	$46,861	$0
Alabama	1	1	11	$48,160	$0
Arkansas	1	1	0	$0	$0
Arizona	3	2	70	$122,066	$354,671
California	5	3	108	$182,255	$0
Colorado	4	2	35	$106,018	$125,000
Connecticut	0	0	0	$0	$0
Florida	2	2	43	$125,400	$0
Georgia	2	2	30	$52,000	$76,466
Hawaii	1	1	20	$18,000	$80,791
Idaho	3	2	32	$156,763	$0
Illinois	1	1	72	$58,200	$156,024
Kansas	3	2	47	$114,580	$219,204
Kentucky	3	2	60	$146,300	$0
Louisiana	2	2	40	$33,470	$0
Maine	1	1	8	$54,480	$0
Michigan	1	1	12	$42,586	$0
Minnesota	1	1	200	$17,500	$0
Missouri	2	1	39	$123,541	$0
Montana	4	2	41	$40,300	$137,355
Nebraska	2	2	8	$47,800	$0
Nevada	1	1	43	$13,545	$0
New Hampshire	1	1	3	$41,000	$0
New Mexico	3	2	52	$129,229	$323,087
New York	0	0	0	$0	$0
North Carolina	5	4	102	$186,095	$0
North Dakota	2	2	28	$46,360	$0
Ohio	0	0	0	$0	$0
Oklahoma	0	0	0	$0	$0
Oregon	4	2	48	$194,100	$0
Pennsylvania	5	2	34	$230,318	$0
Puerto Rico	1	1	32	$59,551	$0
South Carolina	1	1	15	$58,669	$0
Tennessee	0	0	0	$0	$0
Texas	10	6	117	$477,210	$1,076,510
Utah	6	2	91	$197,070	$99,521
Vermont	5	1	134	$193,561	$91,596
Virginia	2	1	??	$182,300	$0
West Virginia	6	2	107	$256,125	$226,543
Wisconsin	2	1	35	$90,790	$0
TOTALS	**98**	**62**	**1727**	**$3,892,203**	**$2,966,768**

* Not all data has been compiled for FY 1996 Total Award Amounts

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Kay Jefferies, elementary counselor
Rick Karr, Special Education
Olton ISD - H.P. Webb Elementary
Olton, TX 79064

LOOKING

at *Inclusion* Through

Rose Colored Glasses...

A Success Story

MAINSTREAM ME ?

THANK YOU --- but
I need no more from you
beyond the basic good manners
set down in any society:
unwritten guidelines
concerning
how one human being treats another ---

I am not rare
any more than your nephew
or a redheaded teacher
or a skinny cheerleader ---

I am sorry laws were necessary
to mainstream me ---
such a humorous gesture ...
like mainstreaming a colt in a pasture
I was baptized in the stream of life
the day I was born ---

I am a part of the earth
like the leaves on that tree,
the fingers on your hand,
the stones and mountains
of various shapes and hues ---

I am simply a child
to whom you are responsible:
to teach, to guide, to discipline
and depending on your size as a person,
to Love.

Connie Hall

When I began teaching in Olton ISD in 1972, all students who needed special services were bused to the special education cooperative in Abernathy, a forty-five miles trip. They left at 6:00 a.m. and return home about twelve hours later. It's difficult enough for parents to leave their children at Pre-K and kindergarten during those first years of school so I can only imagine the dread of putting a child as young as three or four years on a bus to be gone all day.

Since September, 1995, Webb Elementary students have been privileged to attend school in their home town. An elementary life skills class was established to make this possible. We have a program unique in our area because it addresses needs of the very young. We are seeing encouraging results and progress as we're well into the second year of the elementary life skills program.

Inclusion goes far beyond just placing a special needs student in the regular classroom. Ideally, each teacher and/or staff person who works with these kids needs training and materials. A common definition of inclusion needs to embraces so that everyone is working toward a common goal for children. Inclusion is designed to enhance a student's education but without proper preparation, inclusion can prove to be detrimental.

Some obstacles to inclusion are:
1. lack of funding
2. time and communication among all parties involved
3. unwillingness on the part of educators to explore and implement new ideas and methods

Goals of inclusion are:
1. improved education for all children
2. greater opportunities for all kids to lead productive adult lives with dignity and respect
3. sense of acceptance

Each student needs to be placed in the most suitable environment. Most suitable can mean providing assistance by teaching assistants when special needs children are included in the regular classroom, technology or reduced class size and providing special education students with individualized instruction in a setting other than the regular classroom.

Included in this paper are profiles of several of the students who are in Rick Karr's elementary life skills class.

STUDENT PROFILES

Mary is a twelve year old fifth grader. She started to school in Abernathy when she was four years old. She and her mother live together. Her father lives in Olton and does give financial assistance to the care of Mary.

Mary can print her name and write the letters of the alphabet. She is competent on the computer as far as finding a program and following the icons. She printed out a letter recently in perfect form - it just didn't say anything. Mary doesn't read.

When Mary started to school in Olton in September, 1996, she seldom spoke or smiled. She was in her home room the first and last fifteen minutes of each day, spending the rest of the time in the life skills class. After exhibiting inappropriate behavior in P.E. class, Mr. Karr called Abernathy to see how they had handled discipline. He was informed that Mary couldn't handle large open spaces with lots of noise, so she didn't go to P.E. the remainder of the year. However, Mary is attending P.E. and music classes this year. She participates with her class in the twice a year musical programs.

Mary's older sister had a baby last year who was born with multiple health complications. Every time the baby has an appointment with the doctor or was in the hospital, Mary had to miss school because her mother had no one to keep her. Sometimes she just didn't want to come to school and would miss an average of ten days each six weeks. Her attendance is improved this year because of Mrs. Molina working a plan with Mr. Karr. If Mary isn't at school by 8:30 a.m., Mr. Karr would go to the house and get her. He had to go get her one time and she hasn't gone on a "stubborn strike" since.

Last year a full time teaching assistant, Mrs. Ritchey, had to accompany Mary any time she left the room, even to the rest room. She now goes to the rest room by herself and can even go on an errand to another teacher's room if it's located near her classroom.

Mary likes to wash dishes, look at catalogs and sale ads, use the computer and play foosball. She enjoys bringing things from home to show at school.

Teri is a thirteen year old sixth grader. Before she came to Olton in September, 1995, she had been in school placed in a regular classroom. Here the fifth grade teachers were soon frustrated trying to find a way to teach her. After a phone call to her previous school, we discovered that Teri had been identified as a special education student so she was promptly assigned to Mr. Karr's class. She went to P.E. and music with the fifth graders and spent 30 minutes daily in her homeroom. It was determined in the 1996 spring ARD that Teri would remain in the life skills class even though she would be in junior high. She was scheduled to take an art class and work in the junior high office as a helper one period each day. She waited for school to begin each morning with her sixth grade peers.

Teri can print her name, knows the letters of the alphabet and recognizes some numbers. She is dependable and responsible, trying to keep her classmates on task so that they finish their work.

Teri moved before Christmas. Her mother and the mother's boyfriend weren't getting along, so Teri, her mother and her sister had to move out. She was placed in a regular classroom in the new school. She moved back to Olton in January and was here for two weeks before moving again. This incident is indicative of the uncertainty and inconsistency that exists in kids' lives today. Add these circumstances to the fact that Teri is a special needs chid and the outlook for her future is somewhat discouraging.

Roy is a twelve year old fifth grader. So far, he is our biggest challenge because of his medical condition. He has seizures, even though he takes high doses of medication as a preventive. He came to Olton in September, 1994, and we soon realized our facility was not equipped to meet his needs. His third grade teacher was frantic, looking for kindergarten level work for him to do. However, she wasn't able to find anything that he was capable of completing. The other students had no experience with children who were challenged in the ways Roy was, but they soon learned that after a seizure he had to go sleep in the nurse's office. Now the kids are protective of him and watch out for him when he needs help.

Roy has been in Mr. Karr's classroom full time the past two years. He does spend fifteen minutes in his homeroom each morning. He know the alphabet, but can't write it. He can play the alphabet learning games on the computer and likes it. Roy can count to 30 or 40; however, he recognizes the numbers 1 -10.

Roy lives with his mother and four siblings. The mother works 7 days and is off 7 days. The problem is that she works at night and the kids are in the care of a teen-age relative. There is no financial help from the father.

References:

1) Poem: Mainstream Me?, Connie Hall.

2) Handouts: From the Abernathy Special Education Cooperative.

3) Student profiles: Kay Jefferies, elementary counselor.

4) Stress and Your Child, A Parent's Guide to Symptoms, Strategies and Benefits.
Ruth P. Arent, M.A., M.S.W., Arent & Assoc., 1990.

NOTE: Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Key Terminology

MAINSTREAMING

The placement of students with disabilities in one or more general education classes. Proponents generally assume a student must earn his or her opportunity to be mainstreamed through the ability to keep up with work assigned in general education. This concept is closely linked to the special education pull-out concept.

INCLUSION

The commitment to educate each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. It involves bringing the support services to the child (rather than moving the child to the service) and requires only that the child will benefit from being in the class rather than having to keep up with other students.

FULL INCLUSION

The provision of educational services for students with disabilities, in schools where non-disabled peers attend, in age appropriate general education classes under the direct supervision of general education teachers, with special education support and assistance as determined appropriate through the Individualized Educational Planning Committee (IEPC).

REGULAR EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The merger of the governance of special and general education or the merger of the funding streams of each. It is not generally used to discuss forms of service delivery.

Including Students with Disabilities in an Early Childhood Program

- ALL children can LEARN.

- ALL children can LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.

- ALL children develop SOCIAL SKILLS, ways to COMMUNICATE, and FRIENDSHIPS within their daily environment.

- ALL children learn LIFE SKILLS best in NATURAL SETTINGS.

- ALL children LEARN BEST in a MULTIFACETED, STIMULATING ENVIRONMENT.

- ALL children can LEARN WHAT THEY NEED TO KNOW in the SAME SETTINGS AS THEIR PEERS.

- PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT is a CRITICAL component to promoting STUDENT SUCCESS.

- EVERY STUDENT CAN SUCCEED in school and it is the responsibility of ALL EDUCATORS to CREATE THE CONDITIONS which PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS.

Including Students with Disabilities in an Early Childhood Program

– Benefits –

Research and experience have shown the following benefits of educating children with special needs with their non-disabled peers.

- **Students OBSERVE, INTERACT with, and IMITATE PEERS who provide developmentally appropriate models of behavior.**
- **NON-DISABLED PEERS and their PARENTS develop more POSITIVE ATTITUDES towards individuals with disabilities.**
- **More REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS for children with disabilities.**
- **Preschool children with disabilities have a greater probability of SUCCEEDING IN SCHOOL and living more INDEPENDENTLY AS ADULTS.**
- **CONSISTENT EXPERIENCE with CLASSROOM & with CLASSMATES**
  - **ENHANCED SELF-ESTEEM**
  - **Facilitated FRIENDSHIPS**
  - **More POSITIVE VIEW OF DIFFERENCES**
  - **INCREASED INDEPENDENCE**
  - **IMPROVED SOCIAL OUTCOMES**

Mary Susan E. Fishbaugh
Montana State University-Billings
Terry R. Berkeley
Towson State University
Stephen D. Dempsey
Black Hills State University

RURAL SPECIAL EDUCATION IN *THE NINE NATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA*: A POLICY PROPOSAL FOR THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON RURAL SPECIAL EDUCATION

Prologue

Traditionally, "rural" has been synonymous with "farm." Rural schools met both the educational and social needs of farmers and their children. The rural school was the hub for community in isolated rural areas (Berkeley & Bull, 1995; DeYoung & Lawrence, 1995; Herzog & Pittman, 1995). School calendars were even set to coincide with planting and harvesting crops. Teachers met the needs of any and all children in small inclusive settings. There were ample peer and cross-age tutoring. There was no "special" education different from the education afforded any student in the school. In the late 1970s, the National Rural Project was funded by the Federal government to study the effects of P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, on rural special education service delivery. During the years of funding, the National Rural Project (NRP) reported voluminous statistics on every aspect of rural special education (Helge, 1981), produced the required thick governmental grant progress reports (Helge, 1979), and developed training modules for rural special education teacher preparation (Helge, 1986; NRP, 1980). Among the perspectives on rural special education that were explored was the issue of rural diversity.

Rural diversity was described in terms of geography, economy, isolation, population density, and community variables (Helge, 1983). Cultural diversity, defined in terms of ethnicity, was originally discussed as one facet of the differences between and among rural communities. Ethnic diversity was not the focus of rural diversity issues. Today, "rural" must be defined in relation to "metropolitan" and "nonmetropolitan;" at least 90% of today's rural population has little if anything to do with agriculture. The once-upon-a-time conception of rural as homogeneously agricultural that may never have been accurate has become archaic. The purpose of this paper is to review the ACRES definition of rural diversity over time, to explain the notion of diversity as it is presented in the *Nine Nations of North America*, and to propose a broad definition of rural diversity based more upon the culture of community and region than upon ethnicity. Recognition of rural diversity is a necessary precondition in provision of optimal educational opportunities for all rural students.

History

An early National Rural Project report identified "problems" in rural special education service delivery (Helge, 1979). The view of characteristics inherent to rural communities as "problems" was subsequently reversed and rural idiosyncrasies were described as "attributes" that could be used as resources in developing strategies for special education service delivery. The "problems" included the following:

- Cultural Factors

  Language barriers, cultural differences, resistance to change, and economic class differences
- Geographic and Climatic Factors

  Alternate transportation modes, marginal roads, mountainous areas, and long distances
- Socioeconomic Factors

Low tax base, high unemployment, suspicion of external interference, family size, high levels of poverty, migrant employment, fishing and timber employment, mining employment, and farming employment

- Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Staff
- Child Find Activities

Attributes included strategies for the following:

- Overcoming Resistance to Change, Resolving Cultural and Language Differences

  Understanding the ripple effect, employing attitude change techniques, and using mandates
- Coping with Long Distance, Ameliorating Isolation

  Regional information and technical assistance systems, and effectively filling down-time
- Identifying and Using Hidden Resources to Overcome Scarcity

  Training personnel to fill multiple roles, using cost-efficient service delivery models, using parent and community resources, initiating a management information system, using high school students, and interfacing with university personnel
- Recruiting and Retaining Trained Professionals

  Inhibiting teacher burn-out, enhancing inservice incentives-accessibility-quality, and overcoming negative attitudes between teachers and support personnel
- Enhancing Child Find Resources.

A later publication (Helge, 1983) continued to describe the unique strengths and weaknesses of rural areas as multi-faceted. Rural communities were viewed as differing in terms of economics, stability, geography, isolation, and population density.

The American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES), an offshoot of the National Rural Project, continued following the project's demise. ACRES reorganized, and separated from the organization for Rural and Small Schools. The organization continues to publish the *Rural Special Education Quarterly* (*RSEQ*), and hosts a successful national conference annually. A perusal of ACRES attempts to address the issue of rural diversity demonstrates that as an organization, ACRES has lost sight of its early inclusive understanding of diversity based upon the concept of rural community culture.

Diversity in *RSEQ*. The *Rural Special Education Quarterly* has dedicated at least two issues to rural special education diversity. *Volume 8*, Number 1 (1986) was a topical issue on serving cross-cultural populations. Diversity was defined by ethnicity. The articles addressed serving Asian gifted and talented children, involving African American parents, effects of head injury on American Indians, training general educators of American Indians, and developing curricula for Chinese children with limited English proficiency. *Volume 11*, Number 2 (1992) was a topical issue on multicultural needs. As with the earlier journal issue, this one defined diversity in reference to ethnic culture. Occasionally, individual articles in *RSEQ* have addressed student diversity. De Leon and Cole (1994) wrote regarding service delivery to culturally and linguistically diverse rural students with disabilities. A recent issue of *RSEQ* provided both retrospective and prospective snapshots of rural special education (*Volume 14*, Number 2, 1995). Berkeley and Bull (1995) delve into the past, present, and possibilities in rural education. They consider the evolving view of rural from the past idyllic farm vision to the present cacophony of rural definitions, issues, and obstacles. They consider the essence of rural schools, educators, families, and community. Mallory (1995) extends their discussion to application of an ecocultural perspective for rural education. "Eco" refers to the larger political environment, while "cultural" refers to the immediate environment including familial implications. It is in this direction that the present policy proposal continues.

Diversity in ACRES Conference Presentations. A review of ACRES Conference Proceedings from 1991 through 1996 revealed the ethnically based perspective on rural diversity. The Savannah conference (1993) had one presentation that addressed multicultural rural gifted education. To their credit, the presenters viewed multiculturalism more broadly than in terms of minority cultures. They included socioeconomic factors, religion, and unique rural cultures. In Las Vegas (1995), ACRES sponsored an American Indian strand. Topics included barriers to university degrees, networking with Indian communities, field based rural special education teacher preparation, communicating with non-Indian service providers, and cultural immersion. In addition, there was a presentation addressing cultural diversity among rural West Virginia gifted students. Only two presentations addressed diversity at the Baltimore conference (1996). One defined "diverse" learners in terms of students with exceptional educational needs. The other was a case study addressing preparation of special educators for work with cultural and linguistic diversity. The annual ACRES conference has for the most part sponsored only one perspective of diversity, a perspective based on ethnic differences.

Concept of Rural Community. This paper is an attempt to define rural diversity broadly with reference to the regional cultures of rural communities. Such a definition returns to the original conception of rural diversity held by the National Rural Project. The definition synchronizes with past and present concepts of rural community. The definition does not ignore ethnic diversity, but understands it with reference to broader conceptualizations of differences within, between, and among rural communities. Basing an ACRES policy on such an inclusive definition of rural diversity will allow the organization to better meet the educational needs of rural special education students in preparation for adult involvement in their indiosycratic regional community cultures. Such a policy can directly impact the "rural brain drain" (IEL, 1995; Seal & Harman, 1995), and has implications for addressing chronic rural poverty (Hodgkinson, & Obarakpor, 1994; Theobald & Nachtigal, 1995).

Originally, the National Rural Project defined rural diversity according to many different aspects of rurality. Authors who have addressed rural education issues from the early 1980s to the present have defined rural diversity similarly, based on differences in rural communities. Edington and Conrad (1981) defined issues in rural education as the federal role, reverse migration, rural school finance, community involvement, and academic achievement. They stressed that because rural people were not homogeneous and rural environments varied, the issues could only be addressed with consideration for considerable rural diversity.

The October, 1995 issue of Phi Delta Kappan was dedicated to rural education. The concept of rural community was emphasized (DeYoung & Lawrence, 1995; Haas & Lambert, 1995; Herzog & Pittman, 1995; Theobald & Nachtigal, 1995). The profile of an individual rural community impacts the purpose, quality, and outcome of education in that community. Educational reform initiatives are likewise molded by the rural community. The culture of a rural community was not written about in terms of ethnic culture, but in terms of rural versus urban "culture" (DeYoung & Lawrence, 1995). But cultural differences do not end there. Rural cultures differ regionally and economically, as well as ethnically. In fact, any effective reform efforts for the improvement of rural schools must take into account the following considerations (Seal, & Harmon, 1995):

- Rural schools are influenced by the economic and cultural outlooks of their communities
- Rural schools reflect the economic and social stratification of the community
- Rural schools value discipline and hard work
- Rural schools are the cultural and social centers of rural life
- Rural schools serve as a major link between the rural community and the world.

Given the original NRP/ACRES perspective on rural diversity, continuing emphasis on the individuality of rural communities, and the impact of rural community culture on education, we propose developing an ACRES policy statement on rural diversity that has its basis in regional diversity. Regional rural differences consider ethnic diversity, but include economic, political, and community cultural diversity as well.

The Nine Nations of North America

In *The Nine Nations of North America* , Joel Garreau (1982) suggests that we reconsider the borders dividing the United States, Canada, and Mexico. He considers that the maze of state and provincial boundaries to be meaningless. Instead, Garreau describes a North America composed of the following nine nations:

- New England
- The Foundry
- Aberrations
- Dixie
- The Islands
- MexAmerica
- Ectopia.
- The Empty Quarter
- The Breadbasket
- Québec

Few of the boundaries of these nine nations match the political lines on current maps. Some are clearly divided topographically by mountains, deserts, or rivers. Others are separated by architecture, music, language, or the inhabitiants' related occupations. In fact, each has a peculiar economy.

Each nation has its own capitol with a distinctive web of power and influence. A few of the nations are allies, but many are political and economic adversaries. Each commands emotional allegiance from its citizens. Some nations are close to being raw frontiers, while others have four centuries of history. Many have characteristic dialects and mannerisms. Several of the nations have their own acknowledged national poets. These nations look different, feel different, and sound different from each other. Each has its idiosyncratic perspective of the current universe and its individual future world plan.

The common "culture" of each nation supersedes any individual ethnic differences of the citizens. Considering diversity from the perspective of the nine nations has important educational implications for rural communities. Consideration of the culture in each of the nine nations of North America will promote appropriate education programming, prepare students for the economy in which they will have to compete, and facilitate transition of special education students from their rural school to an adult role in one of the nine nations.

ACRES Policy on Rural Diversity (Proposed)

The ACRES policy on rural diversity should be developed and accepted by the organization's membership. The policy should, however, include the following components:

- Policy Title
- Rationale
- Purpose
- Definition(s)
- Statement of Policy

To remain consistent with ACRES original inclusive understanding of rural diversity, to recognize the essential nature of community to ruralness, and to program optimally for rural special education students, the organization's policy on rural diversity should be based upon the *Nine Nations of North America*.

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Dr. R. Fletcher-Carter
Dr. D. Paez
Cheryl Metz
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001
Dr. T. Berkeley
Towson State University
Towson, MD 21204
Dr. C. Medina
Northern Ariz. University
Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5774

FROM THOUGHTS TO PUBLICATION HOW TO GET PUBLISHED IN RSEQ

Why submit manuscripts for publication? According to Henson (1995, p.801), earning "tenure, promotion, and merit pay" influence many professionals. Having an article accepted by a prestigious and/or jureed journal may be reason enough to submit manuscripts, but exchanging professional knowledge seems innate in special educators. Whatever the reason for researching and writing, knowing what you wish to achieve with your writing is paramount to targeting an appropriate journal (Henson). If Rural Education is your special interest, consider the *Rural Special Education Quarterly (RSEQ)*.

The History of RSEQ

In 1979, Murray State University began a newsletter entitled National Rural Research Newsletter. Gaining recognition and popularity because of its rural emphasis the newsletter began to expand and by the sixth volume was renamed the *Rural Special Education Quarterly (RSEQ)*. In 1985, it was the only national scholarly publication solely devoted to rural special education issues (Pawlak, 1985).

As a nationally refereed journal, all manuscripts are reviewed (a) anonymously, (b) by nationally recognized experts, and © using a preestablished rating scale. The percentage of referred journals has increased significantly since 1988. Presently, 85% of professional journals in the field of education meet part of the criteria listed above, while 59.2% met all three criteria (Henson, 1995). Henson's survey of journals editors cited in the Phi Delta Kappan assists professionals in targeting the best journal to fit their specific needs. Henson suggests authors submitting manuscripts need to research specific information regarding *RSEQ* editors' preferences and required criteria (or any journal of choice).

While guidelines are delineated for readers on page one of each Rural Special Education Quarterly issue, certain prerequisites are important to establish. Manuscripts are initially screened based upon the following criteria. The article must: (a) focus on rural special education, (b) identify the target audience, (c) represent a significant contribution to professional literature in the field of rural and small school education, (d) demonstrate practicality, and (e) be logically developed, well organized, and current in nomenclature.

To assist future RSEQ contributors, a meta-analysis of 10 years of publications conducted by RSEQ staff (Hepburn, 1993) is reviewed. This analysis resulted in the identification of four major publication strands: (a) exemplary models of service delivery, (b) research (e.g., applied, theoretical, evaluative, case study), © needs, and (d) policy and position papers (Hepburn). Within these four strands, he also identified some 45 domains. The top ten domains were ranked in frequency of topics as follows (Table 1).

Table 1

Rank	Topic	No. of Articles
1.	Research (basic, questionnaire, applied, evaluation, experimental)	126
2.	Preservice/Inservice	104
	Exemplary Service Models	104
3.	Recruitment and Retention	57
4.	Rural Values and Attitudes	50
5.	Families and Parents	48
6.	Multicultural Issues	41
7.	Supervision and Leadership	38
8.	Resources and Finances	36
9.	Transition	34
10.	Technology	31

Hepburn's top ten topics mirrored Henson's (1995) findings that 46.6% of all published articles report on research of some kind. In his most recent survey, Henson learned that journals focusing on research not only accepted research articles at a higher rate **but** turnaround time was less than other journals. Findings of a review of the first 10 years of *RSEQ* Publications (Hepburn, 1993), indicated that outside of these top ten topics, subjects varied. However, all addressed rural issues and most contributed new knowledge to a specialized pool of information (e.g., early childhood, legal issues, teacher collaboration, disabilities by category, gifted, assessment and diagnosis, related services).

In updating the past four years of published articles in the *RSEQ* (Metz, 1997), Hepburn's strands and most of the domains were retained to facilitate comparisons of RSEQ's early focus with more recent propensities of the past four years (1993, 1994, 1995, & 1996).

While research remains strong in the four major publication strands defined by Hepburn (1993), themes delineating rural needs are even more prevalent. Additionally, there may be a gradual shift or movement in domains (see Table 2)

Table 2

Rank	Topic	No. of Articles or Themes*
1.	Research (basic, questionnaire, applied, evaluation, experimental)	62
2.	Transition	31*
3.	Service Delivery	31*
4.	Preservice/Inservice	26*
5.	Multicultural Issues	26*
6.	Teaming/Collaboration	20*
7.	Families and Parents	19*
8.	Recruitment and Retention	14*
9.	Early Intervention/Childhood	14*
10.	Gov't/Legal	14*

Knowing the current trends may help readers select a topic of interest. If you believe you have an article appropriate for the journal, submit it following the journal guideline for style. Because requirements vary from journal to journal, your adherence to the submission criteria is critical to minimizing revisions, and therefore, turnaround time (Henson, 1995)

Style of Submission

Similar to other professional journals in education, the *RSEQ* publication follows the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (4th ed., 7th printing). Content and organization is as important as non-biased language style. Fluency of expression, concise presentation of information, and clarity are critical elements in journal writing. Technical writing skills (i.e., grammar, punctuation, spelling, use of abbreviations, headings and seriation, and accuracy of sources for reference material) should be edited carefully by the author.

Abstracts are required and should not exceed 150 words. If the submitted manuscript contains figures and charts, they should be in final reproducible format/camera-ready (with each figure or chart occupying no more than a single type written page). Tables should be submitted exactly as they are to appear in the *RSEQ* and constructed in a manner which uses the required software with the appropriate tabs, columns, and settings. Photographs are not used.

According to Henson (1995), although manuscript length varied widely (six pages to 30 pages), 73.7% of the 50 publications surveyed would prefer a manuscript of approximately 12 pages. Lengthy manuscripts may be given less consideration because they are cost-prohibited. *RSEQ* editorial guidelines specify that the entire manuscript, including references, tables, and figures, should not exceed 20 double-spaced, typewritten pages.

So, what can you do to enhance the chance of acceptance of your manuscript for publication?

1. Read past issues of the *RSEQ* to develop a familiarity with the writing content and style.
2. Your article should target the readers not to the editor.
3. Writing about a topic you like and understand will be enhanced by clear and easily understood terminology.
4. Naturally, articles containing new knowledge, techniques, or approaches from a distinctly original perspective are wanted.
5. Your manuscript should be proofread and edited for removal of superfluous words, jargon and mistakes.
6. Ask someone unfamiliar with your work to review your article, someone who resembles the typical reader of the *RSEQ*. [Knowledgeable individuals often assume their message is clear because of the wealth of information they hold. Trust a friend or colleague to tell you what they had difficulty understanding.]

Summary

By following the guidelines for publication outlined on the inside cover of the *RSEQ*, manuscripts which (a) address targeted rural special education issues, (b) contribute new information to the body of knowledge, (c) use correct terminology, (d) are organized, and logically developed, and (e) contain appropriate writing styles, grammar, and non-biased language have a good chance of being selected. The review process takes approximately six months, and currently 60% to 70% of manuscripts are selected for publication, with only minor revisions. If your manuscript is selected, congratulation. If your manuscript is rejected, don't give up! Try, again, for " . . . publication is only a few thoughts away."

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Kay S. Bull and Sarah L. Kimball
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

USING THE INTERNET IN RURAL SPECIAL EDUCATION: ACCESSING RESOURCES

This article deals with accessing resources related to regular and special education via the Internet. The information presented will help you in your teaching and personal development. We assume that you have, or will soon have access to the Internet in your school, home, library or classroom. If you do not, the information in these articles can be used as a lever to help you obtain a computer, modem, and an Internet link for your school, classroom or home.

General Information - Information on the Internet is located in discrete locations (sites). These sites are accessed when users enter information that is unique for that site known as an address or a uniform resource locator (URL). If one does not know the specific address, the site may be found by searching. Sites are linked to other sites. To search the net you can look at specific directories, e.g. Yahoo (http://www.yahoo.com) or you can use a search engine e.g. Alta Vista (http://altavista.digital.com/). A directory is a listing of sites which have been sorted or catalogued by a real person. A search engine is a computer program which follows links and records all or some of the information about the site found at the end of each link. An index is a collection of linked sites composed by a search engine.

Hardware and Software Needs - Hardware needed includes a telephone hookup, modem, Internet provider (server), and at least a 486 computer. Software needs include a browser like Netscape which can be downloaded free from the URL http://angel.heaven.net/netscape.html. A browser is software that searches links in an index created by a search engine. With your Netscape browser installed you should have a Netscape page which gives you buttons for NET SEARCH (random entry to several search engines), NET DIRECTORY (a list of search engines, indexes and specialized search guides), and a command location (called OPEN in Netscape) which is used when you know the address for the site you wish to visit.

Example Search Engine - There are many search engines which operate in different ways. Alta Vista (http://altavista.digital.com) is a full text searcher which accesses both the web and Usenet (which houses chat rooms, user groups, bulletin boards, and other short term data displays). This engine can scan all the text or specific segments of the indexed document. For example, the engine may scan the host (the server where the site resides), site titles (title scans reduce the number of results), images (pictures or videos), links (document connections), URLs, applets (a miniprogram written in Java script), or anchors (which point to hypertext links). Each of these locations in a document can be used in searching the index created by the Alta Vista engine.

Searching with Alta Vista - Alta Vista accepts two levels of query: simple and advanced. A simple query uses one word, several words separated by boolean logic terms (AND, OR, NOT etc.), or a phrase (a string of adjacent words) used to answer the question "I want to find out about *(put your word or phrase here such as dyslexia)*." If a phrase is used, it needs to be put in double quotes to tell the computer that it is a related string of words not a string of words separated with ORs (the default in this engine). If double quotes are not included, the engine may find thousands of sites which include one of each of the words. Alta Vista is case sensitive. Capitalization of proper nouns is necessary and forces an exact match. An exact match is also forced by putting a plus (+) sign before each word that must be in the document or a minus (-) sign before a word to exclude documents with undesirable words. Both + and - are used without spaces so the computer knows they are attached to specific words. For example, in a search for documents related to the concept *empathy* as a construct used by psychologists, most of the sites found related to a musical group called Empathy. To exclude the musical references we used the search empathy -music.

Another feature of the simple search is truncation. Some search engines allow you to look for plurals as well as singular words by automatically using only the root of the word you search. With Alta Vista, you have the control and can decide when to truncate. To truncate a word, give the first three (or more) letters then star (*). For example, if we truncate empathy with empath* we would get empathy, empathic, empathetic, and empathicide etc. on the same search. If we do not truncate, these variants will not be included in the results of the search and some valuable sites may be missed. Another ideosyncracy of this engine is that punctuation is treated as white space and white space defines words, i.e. if you search for "John's Fishing Dock" you are searching a four word phrase. This can cause some real conceptual problems and can make you wonder about your results.

The final thing you must do before you search is to determine what you want to search and what parts of the text you want examined. A *titles only* search limits the results to only documents/sites that are strongly related to your search terms with the search terms in the titles. You may miss something, but all the results should be of interest. If you use *full text* you will get a lot more results but, as we found with empathy, it may be a single mention of the term in paragraph twenty-eight of the document. If you have selected your terms you can submit your search by hitting the ENTER key or clicking on the SUBMIT button with your mouse.

The advanced search gives you more ways of structuring multiple word queries. Advanced searches examine the same fields with a simple search, but add parentheses and the boolean logic term NEAR as well as AND, OR, and NOT. For example, in the empathy search we may be interested when it is related to psychology in which case we search empath* NEAR psych* with both words truncated. In Alta Vista, the NEAR operator will find words that are within 80 characters of each other. If we are interested in both terms together in a site but we do not care if they are in close proximity, we would search empath* AND psych* with both words truncated. If we are interested in either empathy or psychology but not specifically both we could search empath* OR psych*. This later search would give us many more hits using either a text or a title search. If we want to exclude the music group Empathy, we might search psych* AND empath* NOT music. Parentheses are useful for delimiting phrases. Operations within the parentheses, as in algebra, take place first and in the order presented.

In the advanced search the results are returned unordered unless the search terms are entered in the ranking field in the desired order. This is not a great problem if you get eight results but if you get four hundred, sorting can be a major problem. For example, in the empathy search we searched empath* AND psych* NOT music in titles and put empathy in the ranking field then all titles with empathy in them were listed first.

General Search Strategies - Formulating a successful comprehensive search usually begins with the question "What is out on the net about________". The question must be clear, concise, and contain key words to exactly describe your area of interest. After you determine the research topic, consider the scope of the topic in question. This usually involves a narrowing process from broad topics and questions. For example, for the question "What is out on the net about special education?" we will find somewhere between thousands and millions of results, depending on the search engine used. If we narrow the question to what is available about ADHD we still are biting off more than we want to chew. We might narrow the question further to ask "What resources are available to parents of ADHD children which they can use to understand why the children behave the way they do?" This would bring us the ADHD Owner's Manual (http://www.ourworld.compuserv.com/homepages/edutech/) and a number of other sources. Determining the concepts in the question for selecting the search terminology is the next step in developing a search strategy. It is usually appropriate to start with a conceptual analysis prior to the development of your search terms. The concepts used will not necessarily be the terms used in the search. For example, in the ADHD search will your search engine recognize the acronym or do you have to use the full name (attention deficit disorder hyperactivity or ADHD)? When you pick search terms be sure to include synonyms, if there are any, since term usage can vary regionally and by discipline.

After you have selected the terms, select the search logic. The search logic relates to how you ask the search engine to look at the search terms. In our ADHD example we want to look for ADHD in children and for resources for parents. Therefore, we need to tie the ADHD to the children and then tie the whole thing to parents. We also must decide which synonyms for children and parents we want to use. Assuming that we want to focus on children who are preteens we might start with a search string something like this: "attention deficit hyperactivity disorder" OR "attention deficit disorder" AND hyperactivity AND children OR youth AND NOT teenagers AND "parent resources". After you develop the search string, you can select the search engine.

Effective Searches Versus Unexpected Results: There are a number of considerations for an effective search. With a general search, search titles only to keep from finding your search term only tangentially mentioned in a document. Put commas between a series of names. Too many results? Use uncommon terms or unusual words, alternative words with the same meaning, or synonyms to reduce the number of results. Some search engines ignore any 1-2 letter words which may change the meaning and direction of the search. Did you use truncation properly or did the engine automatically truncate and give you things you did not want? Does your engine give you partial searches and if you got a partial search (one or more of the search terms were not used) did the returns look like anything that you could

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use? Use properly nested parentheses or hyphens between words or terms to get the result that you want. For example you get different results if you use (special education) AND blind than if you use special AND (education blind) or special AND education AND blind. Did you exclude the things that you did not want by using AND NOT, NOT or (-) minus? If you used minus remember there should be no space between it and the term. Did you misspell a word or forget to include a variant that you should have used? Capitalization of proper nouns is important as some search engines are case sensitive. Did you get a full or a partial match? If all query terms were not used, use + or - to refine the search. Did your engine use autotruncation to give you all forms of the search terms resulting in useless information? If you used more than one term, did the engine auto default to OR? Sometimes a page creator puts words in the tag, title, or address that are not in the body to draw engines to the page.

You may get a result that looks interesting, but when you call it, it may not respond. There are several possible reasons for this to occur. Occasionally, pages are removed by the owner. Sometimes a page is renamed by the owner to change its content to better represent its subject matter. Usually the owner will leave a directory link that you can click on to get to the page in its new location. However, when this is not done you must wait until the page is reindexed by the web robot, which may take several days or weeks if the server on the other end of the connection is down or too busy. When it comes back up you can access the link if you have bookmarked it. Sometimes the server on the other end is busy and your server times out or fails to connect within its required time and breaks off the connect attempt. When this happens you may want to wait a few minutes to try again, try at a less busy time of day for the server's time zone, or try a mirror site. If the server is geographically far away it may take longer to route to it, be patient. Check the server's hours of operation, it may be shut down for the night. The server on the other end may have access restrictions which will not allow unauthorized users to connect. Usually, but not always, the server will prompt you to input the appropriate password, depending on the system you are trying to reach. Sometimes you will see ERROR 404 PAGE/FILE NOT FOUND when you are following a link. When this happens check to make sure you have put in the correct URL. If the engine is case sensitive check for case. Also check symbols, e.g., ~, to make sure they are correct. If the URL is long, move up the tree to a higher level in the directory until you are at the top of the tree. If you still get a 404 ERROR it is likely that the URL does not exist or that the link was set up incorrectly. Finally, your system may be designed not to allow you to connect to certain sites or kinds of sites, like the V chip for children's television.

There are times when you know a link is out there, someone told you about it, you heard of it but did not get the address, but you can't find it. This may happen due to heavy traffic, the server being down, or the search timing out as previously discussed. Also, robots (search engines) may have been excluded from the site using the robot exclusion protocol.

Rural Sites - There are a number of sites which provide links to rural interest locations. We might start with the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory's Rural Education page. From this page (http://www.nwrel.org/ruraled/) you can link to ERIC-CRESS (http://www.ael.org/ericp.htm). You could also contact the National Rural Education Association, the oldest voice in rural education (http://www.cocostate.edu/orgs/NERA), or you might be interested in looking at research and development resources for rural schools (http://www.ael.org/polling). This last site is the laboratory that houses the Clearinghouse for Rural Education and Small Schools and lists the Rural Education Directory which deals with the nature of rural education. The Directory is also found at gopher://ericir.sry.edu:70/00/clearinghouses/16houses/CRESS/directories.rural.asc. This gopher contains many resourcesof interest and articles related to the following topics: declining enrollment in rural areas, a four day school week in rural settings, guidance and counseling approaches which are best for rural areas, alternative assessment in rural schools, fiscal equity between large and small schools, rural early childhood issues, student grouping practices, population trends, and being at risk in rural areas. These sites also contain recent articles from the Rural Special Education Quarterly, the Rural Educator, and the Journal of Research in Rural Education as well as resources for teaching math and science in rural schools and lists of rural resources and organizations such as ACRES. Rural community development resources (grants and other funding) are at http://www.unl.edu/Kellogg/Index.html, and rural development partnerships are at (http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/nrdp).

Sites for Kids - There are quite a number of Internet sites for children to explore in your classroom or library. We will list only a few of these because kids, once they get started, are likely to find many more in which they are interested without any help. A large site which is created specifically for children is Yahooligans (http://www.yahooligans.com/). This site contains the best of the Yahoo directory of items which are appropriate for children and youth. The site will also link to the adult Yahoo

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(http://www.yahoo.com/societyculture children/links_for_kids) and provides links for kids. This page provides links to the Whitehouse for Kids, Wombat Net, Girl Talk, The Playroom, The Camel Who Disliked Smoking (an antismoking site) and more. Other general sites which you may want to introduce children to are Kids Link (http www.microsoft.com/616/default.htm), A2Z, and Just for Kids (http://www.a2z.lycos.com/Just_For_Kids).

There are many sites oriented toward children which provide specific information and or instructions. The library at http//www.bcpl.lib.md.us/~hhirsch.learn.html focuses on learning up to age 10. The Online Internet Project (http arlo.wilsonhs.pps.k12.or.us/search.html) teaches students how to search the net by going through the process of choosing a topic, developing a search strategy, finding where to search, and how to evaluate the search results). The Ebsco site lists 400 accessible magazines and provides Kidsnet (http://www.ponyshow.com/kidsnet/website.htm). Research-it (http www.iTools.com/research-it/research-it.html) allows students to look up quotations, access acronyms, use a dictionary electronically, and provides translation to and from a variety of languages. Children's literature can be found at Stories for Kids (http://www.thekids.com) and Science for Kids (http://www.now2000.com/bigkidnetwork/science.html), which provides access to zoos, museums, sports, and other science related topics.

Software/sHareware/Freeware for Children - There are many pieces of freeware which have been developed to help children with a variety of disabilities function more effectively. Kaitlin's Place (http://www.rit.edu/~easi/resource/kaitlinintro.html) provides keyboard modifications, joystick controls, mouse emulators, voice recognition, magnification, braille translation screen readers and the like. Another source is Macintosh Disability Shareware (http://www.ecnet.net/users/gnorris/place.shtml). This site provides most of the same stuff as Kaitlin's place but for a MAC system.

There are many sites that provide software to downloaded for use in teaching both basic and advanced skills. The American Free Electronic Library (http://www.cris.com/%7EAfel/) provides a spelling tutor and basic math programs. Altus Educational Software (http://www.bsoftware.com/seducate.htm) has programs for cloze procedures, flashcard makers, vocabulary builders, grammar programs, and worksheet generators. The shareware library (http://www.mesagroup.com/cdrom/shware.htm) sells cd-rom's at cost ($8.00) for children 2-8 years which contain games, vocabulary training, spelling, geography, math, colors, opposites, shapes, animated math, telling time and the ABCs. Games Domain has a pair of sites with shareware for MACs or DOS based machines (http://www.gamesdomain.com/tigger/swnprogram/html). With the windows extension, this site has Logo, Logic, How to Write a Homepage, and Kids Multimedia. Its companion site (/sw-mac.html) has programs for numbers, ABCs, reading and math , among other subjects. The DOS based companion site (sw-pcl.html) has programs for the alphabet, letters and numbers, art, mathematics, animals and reading.

A major Australian site has programs for students at all levels (http://www.gu.ed.au/aers/edsw/d-slang.htm). This site extension, called Senior Language, has programs for English and grammar, phonic spelling, a grammar analyzer, spelling, reading, vocabulary roots, word power, and word puzzles. A companion site called Junior Math with the extension (d-jmath.htm) has programs for basic multiplication, basic math, drills for adding, subtracting, multiplication and division, arcade style math games, math castle, counting and animated math. Another companion site with the extension (d-jmisc.htm) has programs for music, doll dressing, paper dolls and coloring books. The Junior Language companion site (d-jlang.htm) has an electronic storybook, letter lotto, alphabet games, spelling and balloon spelling, animated words, say-read-spell, phonics spelling, ABCs, and an animated alphabet. There are a number of other site extensions for this site. Check them all out.

A very large Australian site (http://www.gu.edu.au/aeres/edsw/) has a great deal of freeware for a variety of levels of students. This site has a number of different extensions which add to the basis URL and access different levels in the directory. For example the extension "d-astronomy.htm" provides programs about skymaps, UFOs's, a planetarium, various planet and the moons of Jupiter, deep space, and pictures of astronomical events. History and geography are found at the extension "d-hisgeo.htm" which provides programs about naming the capitols of the world, state history and quizzes (these may be Australian states), world maps, historical timelines, and a world atlas. The extension "d-ssci.htm" provides programs from senior science. This extension includes programs about cell structure, DC circuits, electricity, one cylinder engines, practicing with chemical formulas, volts, resistance and current, plant growth, electrical circuit simulation, earth science tutorials, temperature conversions, and a game which teachers chemical valences. The miscellaneous extension "d-smisc.htm" has Jeopardy for Groups, trivia games, cultural literacy, an atlas, environment, logic and deduction, writing a resume, and puzzles. The senior math extension "d-smath.htm" includes a differential equation solver, metric conversions, drill programs, tutor programs, flash card makers, problem solving, multiplication and math games. The low vision extension "d-lowvis.htm" has computer books for the blind, a brailler, a speech synthesizer, a large character text processor, a large character calculator, a checkbook manager, and a braille and speak program.

General/Multipurpose Sites - Multipurpose sites usually are link sites which do not in themselves contain the resources that you are looking for but have links to more specific sites. When you begin looking for educational information and you are not doing a general search, multipurpose sites are convenient. We should note here that we report only the unique sites and that multipurpose sites share many common links that we only report once. Let us start with Web Ed K-12 links (http://explorer.sertec.org/explorer/aux/wEdlist.html). This massive site contains the following information: a users guide to educational programming on PBS, a link to the Math/Science Clearinghouse, a link to African-Americans in science, a page for Odyssey of the Mind which is a creativity contest for students through the college level, a middle school kids website, a link to Volcano World where you can see volcano development, access to The Interactive Frog (a virtual frog which can be dissected without the smell of formaldehyde), a page on collaborative visualization, the Kidopedia (an encyclopedia created by children), and much, much more. This site also contains an educators' guide to the Internet which provides navigational tips to finding your way around to more good educational sites of special interest.

Another large site, Web Ed Wisconsin (http://badger.state.wi.us/agencies/dpi/www/webed.html) is provided by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. This site provides web guides, kidsite links, teacher materials in science, math, and history, parent links, references and multicultural information and links. The Busy Teacher web site (http://www.ceismc.gatech.edu.busyt/) provides many resources and lesson plans for biology, chemistry, ecology, geology, mathematics, paleontology, physics, social studies, and recess. Check out the last one! A similar site is the Teachers Helping Teachers site (http://www.pacificnet.net/~mandel/). This site provides a topic of the week designed to get you to come back on a weekly basis, a set of special education links, the arts, social studies, science, mathematics, language arts and classroom management.

Content Specific Sites: Literature and Language Arts - There are a number of huge sites on the net related to literature and language arts. A site that seems to have about everything is the Children's Literature Web Page (http:www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index/html). This site has hundreds of online stories including myths, classics, contemporary, and collections of stories, best sellers, online book reviews and resources for storytellers, writers, illustrators, teachers and parents. More specific sites of interest for small children include children's stories online (http://www.magickeys.com/book/index.html), Eldrbarry's Raven tales (http:www.seanet.com/~eldrbarry/rabb/run.htm) which has Eldrbarry's stories about the raven, specific Indian stories, and Native American stories about youth and legends. This site also has links to native American art and museums. Nikolai's web site (http://www.nikolai.com/stories/story.htm) has reading comprehension activities, tall tales, short stories and a program where children can create their own stories. Wacky Web Tales (http://www.hmco.com/hmco/school/tales/index.html) provides stories written by children for children. Billy Bear's Playground (http://www.cass.net/%7erainiew/welcom.html) provides online storybooks, animated story books, games, and a program for creating your own personalized stories. Tales of Wonder is another interesting site (http://www.eca.ucdavis.edu/~darsie/tales.html). This site provides tales from the middle east, Russia, Siberia, central Asia, China, Scandinavia, Africa, India, England, Scotland, Japan, and tales of Native Americans. A site for picture reading literacy (http://www.sped.ukans.edu/~pix_lit/) should be useful for teaching story lines and comprehension to nonreaders. It provides picture story sequences with task analyses, word lists, materials lists and special instructions. In the same vein there is a guide to children's literature and disabilities which has stories about disabled children which can be used to introduce disability issues to the abled (http://www.kidsource.com/nichcy/literature,html).

Finally, we would suggest the you visit the Student Page (http://www.execpc.com/~dboals/kids.html). This page has a great number of links including writing tutorials, children's electronic texts, a link to books on African-American heros, an interactive program which allows you to create your own character from Dr. Suess, a Goosebumps page, many magazines for children and teens, the Book Nook by Kids, Cyberhaunts for Kids, and games. Also, there is a collection of story resources including The Book Pile, fairy tales, a weekly story tellers circle, fishing stories, Tales of the World, picture books, the Ghost Zone, Candlelight Stories, the Banyan Tree Friends, the String Fairy, the Reading Room, kids stories, and Aesop's Fables.

Content Specific Sites: Mathematics Resources - There are many sites which provide information on lesson plans and programs for mathematics. We have a few to share with you and we have tried to list the links on these sites that are unique. Also, they have many overlapping links which we have not listed. Let us start with a site called The Wonderful World of Math. This site (http://plainfield.bypass.com/~union/world/html) has links to NCTM standards, Math Connections, Mathland, Lesson Plans On Line, math from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (a great site), Explore Math outline, and Do It -Internet lessons in mathematics. The K-12 Teachers Place (http://forum.swartmore.edu/teachers/k12 teachers.html) provides software for mathematics at a variety of levels, a chat room for talking math and teaching, classroom materials, and a variety of Internet math projects.

There is a site for Title One mathematics resources (http://homepage.interaccess.com/~ky/math.html). This unique site contains a page for Ask Dr. Math, Escher patterns, a problem solving page, math proficiency tests, lesson plans, and a weather unit. A similar site (http://www.ccismc.gatech.edu/busyt/math.html) contains Busy Teacher math materials. This site has materials for logic, parent involvement, lesson plans, teacher tips and ideas, and the puzzle of the month.

Content Specific Sites: Science Materials - Some sites specialize only in science. However, remember that there are a large number of general sites that have some science information on them. One major science speciality site is called Science Education Resources (http://www.cedarnet.org/schools/science.html). This site contains links to elemental science, science exploration, the Franklin Institute Science Museum, DNA to Dinosaurs, oceanography, the heart, paleontology, insects, and science lesson plans. A site called General Science Education Resources (http://www.hpcc.astro.washingtonon.edu/scied/gensci.html) provides sites about the ocean planet, helping children learn science, a bad science site, interactive multimedia science, a physical science activities manual, and the UCSD Lesson Plan Gopher. Internet Resources for Science Education (http://www.educ.drake.edu/gerlovich/web_sites.html) is the label for another good site which has links to the NASA home page, Kids as Global Scientists, Newton's apple, Kids Web, the Virtual Frog, the Village School House, Interactive Computers for Kids, a science Archie, and the Science News home page. Finally, the Teaching Science Site (http://www.csun.edu/~vceed009/ideas.html) has ideas and activities, a Kids Did This science hot list, Cockroach World, a Homework Help page, lesson plans and activities for Earthday, biology, and a set of searchable databases.

Content Specific Sites: Social Studies - The Student Page for Social Studies (http://www.execpc.com/~dboals/kids.html) provides links to Maya Quest, Thurgood Marshall's Homepage, the Hands On Children's Museum, the Future Net Kid's page, a Girl's World, Smokey the Bear's page, career information, Street Smart on the Web, and Story Resources. The Busy Teacher page (http://www.ceismc.gatech.edu/busyt/soc.html) has links to lesson plans, activities, teaching tips, civics, current affairs, and Get Fiscal. It also connects to a variety of references including the Legislative Congressional Library, the Federal Web Locator, and the CIA Fact Book.

The last and largest site (http://www.csun.edu/~vceed009/socialstudies.html) includes plans, activities, and teaching strategies for social studies including African American lesson plans, Ask Asia, civics education lesson plans, lesson plans for teaching about China, Japan, news multimedia, core knowledge, critical thinking, labor history, economics, geography, and media. Also included are links to the UN, the Civil War Gazette, Teen Court, the Edstock Stock Market (where you can practice playing the market), Judges In Class, K-3 Internet projects, a map maker, Central America, and the Holocaust. There are also links to teaching strategies such as creating web documents, teacher talk chat room, and a page on links. There are links to a Bag O'Tricks for social studies, a Spice Island Voyage, Time Detectives, using the History Channel, and a teacher talk forum.

Special Education Teachers' Sites - The most comprehensive site for special education is SERI (http://www.hood.edu/seri/serihome.htm). SERI stands for Special Education Resources on the Internet and is a mega-compilation of links which will take you to samples of all of the special education resources on the net. SERI has links to organizations including national organizations and universities. It provides links to general special education resources, products, legal issues and advice, discussion groups, specific kinds of handicapping conditions such as mental retardation, physical and health disorders, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, speech impediments, gifted and talented, autism, visual impairment behavior disorders and hearing impairment. In addition, the site has links to pages on technology, inclusion, transition, psychology, medicine and health, and parents of special needs children.

A Teachers Helping Teachers page (http://www.pacificnet.net/~mandel/specialeducation.html) provides a

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project book for the physically handicapped including art and book projects. It also has information related to the sense organs, ADHD behavioral management, and methods for dealing with behavior problems. A page of Internet resources for special educators (http://www.interactive.net/~wader/sped.htm) provides links to resources related to teaching resources, rehabilitation, IEP programs, early childhood special education, disability categories including PKU and hyperlexia, links to clearinghouses, assistive technology, ADA, and web sites for students.

General Disabilities Sites - A site called Internet Resources for Special Education (http://w3.one.net/~julio_c/) is a typical general disabilites site. It provides general links and links for autism, seizure disorders, Rett's syndrome, rare diseases, spinal muscular atrophy, hydrocephalus, cleft-affected children, child amputee, brain injured, Asberger's syndrome, and ADHD. The Special Needs Education Network (http://www.schoolnet.ca/sne/) provides information about and links to muscular dystrophy, learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, CP, autism, multiple sclerosis, gifted and talented, FAS, Down's syndrome, deaf, visual impairment, dyslexia, ADD and other links.

More information can be found at the Disability Directory (http://www.womensnet.org/pwd/) which has information about women with disabilities, developmental disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, independent living and regular special education links. Disability Resources on the Internet (http://disability.com/cool.html) provides information about careers and employment, software, medical, mental disabilities, physical disabilities, prothesis, recreation, rehabilitation, and sensory disabilities. Disability Sites on the WWW (http://www.prostar.com/%7Ethearc/dislink.htm) has links dealing with feeding gastronomy, Rubinstein-Taybi syndrome, tuberous sclerosis, PKU, axis disability, and many regular special education links. Those interested in adaptive technology can find a large list at http://interwork.sdsu.edu/ablenet.crc.html. A mental health information site (http://onlinepsych.com/mh/) provides information about ADHD, various disabilities from a psychological perspective, eating disorders, obsessive/compulsive disorders, and post traumatic stress disorder.

Mental Retardation: Down's Syndrome Sites- These sites relate primarily to mental retardation. Most, but not all, have a focus in Down's syndrome. The American Association of Mental Retardation home page (http://www.aamr.org/disres.htm) provides information about the organization and links to rehabilitation information, the National Association for Down's syndrome, the Chariot magazine, The Association for Severely Handicapped (TASH) and other links. The Mental Retardation Web site (http://www.idir.net/~adabbs/mrsites.html) provides links to the Job Accommodation Network, national information, Our Kids, Parents Helping Parents, and Special Olympics, which can also be found directly (http://www.specialolympics.org/).

The Cliniweb site for mental retardation (http://www.ohsu.edu/cliniweb/c10/c10.496.html) provides a great deal of information about relatively rare syndromes. Topics include Cri-Duchat syndrome, homocystinuria, Laurena-moon-biedl syndrome, Williams syndrome, Lesch-Nyham syndrome, oculocerebrorenal syndrome, Angelman syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, and others.

Learning Disabilities Sites - Sites specifically for the learning disabled include the Curry School's Office of Special Education page (http://curry.edschool.vi.edu/ e/ose/categories/ld.html) which provides information on computers and learning disabilities, dyslexia, general resources, related organizations, definitions, and a variety of articles related to learning disabilities. Nerdworld Media (http://www.nerdworld.com/cgi-bin/udata.cgi/990) provides links to grant opportunities, language based difficulties, dyslexia, and prescriptive learning. NICHCY provides fact sheets on learning disabilities (http://www.kidsource.com/nichcy/). A general learning disabilities site page (http://indie.ca/eg/95.htm) provides information on ACT disability resources, neurological disabilities, ADD, dyslexia, and the Learning Disability Association America. Finally, there is a site (http://www-ld.ucsf.edu/pubs.html) which provides language based interactive training games related to phoneme identification, circus sequencing, and phonic matching.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Sites - The best of a few sources is the ADHD Owner's Manual (http://ourworld.compuserv.com/homepages/edutech/). This site provides information on how it feels to have ADHD, who gets it, associated learning disabilities, behavioral and other treatment intervention methods, effective medication, neurology, and tips for teachers. Some sites that provide a variety of ADHD articles and fact sheets are http://www.kidsource.com/nichcy/addl.html, http://www.yahoo/com/health and http://family.starwave.com. Another site (http://www.chadd.org/50class.htm) provides fifty tips on classroom management of ADD problems.

Visually Impaired Sites - Some Internet sites which provide information about visual impairment and blindness provide resources and others provide links. We will start with a generic site (http://www.igc.apc.org/pwd/) which provides access to several organization such as the American Foundation for the Blind, the American Council for the Blind, the American Federation of the Blind, and the National Federation for the Blind. The Seaside Links for Vision Disabilities (http://www.seaside.org/linx.html) connects to Braille Services, Low Vision Land, Windows tips for use with low vision, an interactive braille guide, a manual on how to guide the blind, and the Danish Electronic Library for the Blind. The Blindness Resource Center site (http://www.nyise.org/orgs.htm) provides links to the American Printing House for the Blind, the Clearinghouse for Information Technology, Recording for the Blind, the National Center to Improve Practice, a page about leader dogs, and a ski school for the blind. The Telesensory Blindness Resource Center (http://www.nyise.org/blind.htm) provides information about resource sites, braille, translators, advocacy, deaf-blind, eye disease, organizations and universities, vendors for technology, and homepages for the blind community.

We have reported on a few of the thousands of sites for rural special educators on the Internet. You can find other sites and much interesting information, but don't be distracted by random topics even if they look good. Put bookmarks in those locations and go on with the search. There are many interesting sites on the Internet which will get you started in looking for resources and information which, in the past, could only be found in a library, and only in a library in a very large city. The Internet has a great variety of resources and the number is growing daily. URLs change rapidly. Some listed here may have moved or changed since this article was written. Good hunting.

Suzanne M. Martin, Ph.D.
West Virginia University
508 Allen Hall, Box 6122
Morgantown, WV 26506

THE NATIONAL AGENDA FOR ACHIEVING BETTER RESULTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SERIOUS EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCES: IMPLICATIONS FOR RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

In November, 1995, the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders hosted a national conference to explore the research needs and major issues in the study of emotional/behavioral disorders (E/BD). According to Shores and Jack (1996) "There are enormous needs for additional research in our field" (p. 5). Issues regarding social validation, assessment, management strategies, social skills training, and personnel preparation were but a few of the research issues and needs discussed at the conference. Of particular importance to this paper is the issue of personnel preparation for teachers of students with E/BD. Whelen and Simpson (1996) center their discussion on the importance of producing effective outcomes for teachers. These authors state that research is needed to study the linkages among resources, activities, and personnel preparation programs. Kamps and Tankersley (1996), in their article about prevention of E/BD, list numerous school variables that contribute to behavioral and emotional problems, including teachers who are inadequately prepared. The lack of adequately prepared teachers is particularly evident in the area of E/BD (18th Annual Report to Congress, 1996).

Personnel preparation issues for students with E/BD take on an additional need when trying to meet the needs of the rural community in such states as West Virginia. Fitzgerald and Bloodsworth (1996), in reviewing the learning characteristic of rural students, found these students to have particular learning styles. For example, these students were seen to have a strong preference to cooperate with others, a common characteristic of persons in rural communities. Along with these learning styles Helge (1990) found the prevalence for students at risk in rural communities to be high. The reasons for this high incidence can be found in the numerous issues that face rural communities. Issues that put these children and youth at risk for E/BD include poverty, alcohol/substance abuse, victims of child abuse, illiteracy, migrant farming, and school drop-outs (Helge, 1991). Cheney and Muscott (1996) found that in order to increase the success of students with E/BD problems a number of essential pieces must fall into place. These pieces include the acquisition and use of new skills and strategies by teachers, the increased involvement of families in school decisions, faculty cohesiveness, collaboration with parents, and support and commitment of administrators. Yet our current system of services is failing to provide this collaborative education to our students with E/BD (Cessna & Skiba, 1996).

When reviewing the National Agenda for Achieving Better Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance (1993), we see evidence supporting the claim of Cessna and Skiba. The academic outcomes for the students with Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) are frightening. These students fail more courses and have lower grades than any other group of students with disabilities. Their graduation rate is 42% compared to 76% of all students. Students with SED miss more school days per year than do students in any other category and their drop out rate for grades 9 through 12 is 48% compared to only 24% for all high school students. Encounters with the juvenile justice system for this population are staggering. Twenty percent of SED students are arrested before they leave school. Fifty-eight percent are arrested within five years of leaving school and of the students with SED who drop out of school, 73% are arrested within five years of leaving school (1993).

Providing effective services

Providing effective services to children and youth with serious emotional disturbance (SED), and or E/BD, and their families has long been a problem of national concern. The purpose of this paper is to present the seven targets of the National Agenda for Achieving Better Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance and the underlying assumption that supports this proactive approach to a continuum of services for these children and their families. The agenda provides a framework from which to provide the necessary services to these students and their families.

The seven targets of the National Agenda for Achieving Better Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance are as follows:

1. Expand positive learning opportunities and results
2. Strengthen school and community capacity
3. Value and address diversity
4. Collaborate with families
5. Promote appropriate assessment
6. Provide ongoing skill development and support
7. Create comprehensive and collaborative systems

These seven targets are based on the assumption of a nation that is prepared to foster emotional development and adjustment in children and youth with or at risk of developing SED. This assumption is the critical foundation upon which the success of these students is built. It looks at students with or at risk of developing SED and sees their potential for success at school, work, and in the community (1993).

Obstacles and Opportunities

Obstacles in implementing a comprehensive service delivery model that follows the National Agenda often are more difficult to overcome in rural communities than in other communities. The rural culture, or idea that "we take care of our own", is indeed a factor. Outside assistance is frowned upon and often shunned based on this thinking. Not accepting or feeling the need for outside help leads to lack of social, psychological, and family counseling services in many rural settings. Economic and social difficulties are also part of the rural picture (Helge, 1991). Discussions in a brain storming session with eight Masters level teachers in preparation for students with E/BD confirm these findings. These eight teachers concur that the implementation of the National Agenda is difficult due to the issues that face teachers and parents in rural settings. Issues such as transportation, lack of knowledge of E/BD issues, lack of collaboration, poverty, less opportunities, job loss, and difficulty in service provision and delivery are but a few of the points these teachers made when thinking of the obstacles that stand in the way of providing positive, wrap around services for the E/BD population.

Can these obstacles become opportunities? Yes. These obstacles can become opportunities when allocation of dollars is changed; when transportation is provided; when distance education and technology is used to build a solid knowledge base; when students, parents, teachers, and all involved with service delivery are empowered to move forward with the positive approach of the National Agenda. Personnel preparation is the key. Teachers whose professional development opportunities allow them to turn these obstacles into opportunities can make a difference in the services delivered to children and youth with E/BD and their families. Professional development activities that empower the local teacher/behavioral specialist to stay in his/her rural community are important to the continuum of services necessary to serve these children and their families in rural settings.

West Virginia is a rural state with many of the educational concerns found in rural and low socioeconomic school districts across the country. The difficulties in providing appropriate educational services to children and youth with SED or E/BD are many in West Virginia as well as other rural states. In trying to alleviate some of these difficulties, the National Agenda for students with SED has been incorporated into the curriculum of graduate program in the area of Behavior Disorders at West Virginia University. In an attempt to move the National Agenda on SED forward, eight students, holding teaching certificates in areas of general education and with various background experiences, were selected in a highly competitive program that prepares them to become behavioral specialists. A strong base of coursework and highly specialized practica and internships are the cornerstones of the program. All experiences are in rural communities. The information provided in this program can be infused in coursework at the preservice and inservice level of personnel preparation programs.

Implications

The difficulties that face rural communities in providing appropriate services to students with E/BD and their families are many. These obstacles must be viewed as opportunities if we are to be successful in implementing the National Agenda for Better Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance. Realization that professional development of teachers to serve these students is paramount. But, the realization that well prepared teachers are not the total answer, also must be made. The many factors that affect the rural community must be viewed in connection with the many school issues in order to provide complete and appropriate services for all children. Future study needs to be conducted in order to determine the most effective model in providing these services.

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Miller, Kevin J. Ed.D
Wienke, Wilfred D. Ed.D
West Virginia University

Training Rural General Educators to Serve Students with Learning Disabilities in Inclusive Education Settings

In West Virginia, over half of students who have disabilities are placed in the regular classroom. State Policy 2419, Regulations for the Education of Exceptional Students (West Virginia Department of Special Education, 1990), gave major emphasis to "non-pullout" programming for identified students who have disabilities. Even though this has been a policy since 1990, a 1994 monitoring report by the U.S. Department of Education found that in West Virginia, an area of concern was assurance that students are appropriately placed in the least restrictive environment. Consequently, the 1994 West Virginia Legislature passed a bill dealing with the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular education classrooms, and it is now in effect. Its provision mandates: 1) each school Faculty Senate to develop a strategic plan for inclusion in that school, 2) increased participation of the regular education teacher in the IEP process, and 3) specific training for regular educators to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the regular classroom. The project here described is designed to significantly improve the availability, content and quality of a program to train special educators to facilitate inclusive practices. The broad goals of the project are:

1: to increase the knowledge and skills of functioning regular education teachers through training leading to full certification in area of learning disabilities

2: to provide trainees with the skills and competencies needed for a facilitative role in involving all educators and parents in preparing for and implementing responsible inclusive practices.

The innovative foci of this project are that: 1) general education teachers within entire schools are targeted for training leading to certification in learning disabilities, and leadership in inclusive practices, 2) these general education teachers must be fully employed while being trained, 3) program competencies must be demonstrated in the teacher's home school and in their own regular education classroom in the hope that training effects will be more permanent, and 4) parents are involved as part of training.

Certification Training

The coursework leading to teacher certification in learning disabilities includes four core courses, namely: 1) Introduction to Special Education, 2) Curriculum and Methods for Special Education, 3) Special Education Assessment, and 4) Classroom/Behavior Management. These four courses are followed by two courses focusing on learning disabilities, namely: 1) Introduction to Learning Disabilities, and 2) Teaching Strategies for Learning Disabilities. The certification portion of the program culminates with a teaching practicum . A key feature in this teacher training model is the applied course assignments. Each of the courses have been modified for implementation in this project to achieve a closer relationship between theory and practice.

Inclusive Schooling Training

In addition to the coursework leading to certification in learning disabilities, the project provides coursework and experiences to assist trainees in developing competence in providing instruction using the most current effective practices for delivering instruction to students with learning disabilities in the general education classroom. This area of the instructional program is presented in two phases.

The first phase focuses on knowledge and skills needed to provide instruction in a collaborative, inclusive environment. The second phase focuses on the leadership knowledge, skills and strategies to introduce and institutionalize an effective instructional program in an inclusive setting. Instruction is structured in modules. The course format for all modules includes a variety of delivery approaches. Readings about key concepts are reinforced and elaborated via lecture, discussion, in-class presentations, simulation activities and field based assignments. In-class and assigned activities provide experience, guided practice, and independent decision making opportunities. Each of the four modules is briefly described to provide the reader with some specificity of the content which is presented and the competencies which trainees are expected to demonstrate.

Phase One

Phase one is delivered in a course which focuses on knowledge and skills associated with teaming/collaboration, instructional strategies, and various Inclusion models to responsibly educate at-risk and identified students with disabilities within the general education classroom. The course is presented in a three Module format. They are entitled: 1) Collaborative Strategies, 2) Instructional Strategies for Inclusive Classrooms, and 3) Inclusion Theories and Strategies.

Module I: Collaboration Strategies. Competencies included in Module I are associated with the skills of collaborative problem solving, communication, conflict resolution, and concensus-building.

Module II: Instructional Strategies for Inclusive Classrooms. This Module is designed to prepare teachers to teach students experiencing learning problems within the regular classroom. This module targets educational and physical adaptations in the regular classroom to meet the varied needs of at-risk students and students with mild disabilities. While the methods certification courses focus on strategies for teaching special education students, this module will stress their use within the context of the regular classroom.

Module III: Inclusion Theories and Strategies. Module III focuses on acquiring a working knowledge of Theories/Modules designed to facilitate appropriate inclusive schooling practices which meet the needs of identified and at-risk students. As part of their coursework, project teachers identify support needs of school administrators, staff, parents, and community members. Project teachers then analyze advantages and disadvantages of various support models (COACH, ALEM, MAPS, etc.) as they apply to their home school. This module stresses the use of appropriate formative and summative evaluation methods to measure the impact of support models and interventions adopted.

Phase Two

Phase two of the inclusion instructional program focuses on techniques to implement inclusive education practices in a school-wide program. It therefore is designed to assist participants in acquiring knowledge and skills to facilitate the institutionalization of an effective program within a school or possibly a school system. The instruction is packaged in a newly created course entitled *Leadership for Planning School-Wide Inclusion*. A brief description is provided to elaborate the course's specific content.

Module IV: Leadership for Planning School-Wide Inclusion: This module culminates the training project. It targets competencies related to organizing and implementing inclusion related training activities for teachers, administrators, parents, and other education community members. Participants acquire the knowledge and skills to develop, conduct, and evaluate formal and informal staff development training programs. As part of the course requirements, project teachers identify professional growth topics in collaboration with regular education teammates. The project teachers then design training programs based on the identified needs. Thus, assignments are tailored to specific needs of the educators, parents, and other education community members in their home schools.

Impact

The project is designed so that over the 3 year project duration, 40 functioning regular educators will receive training to: 1) obtain full certification to teach school age individuals with mild/moderate learning disabilities, and 2) provide support and staff development for implementing inclusive practices at their home schools. Partnerships will be developed which will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children at participating schools. This will be accomplished by including parents of both special and regular education students as community partners in the training and planning activities for inclusive schooling practices. In summary, the project provides regular education teachers with access to programs to improve their professional skills, and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to serve students with learning disabilities in inclusive settings.

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Rebecca Newcom Belcher
Dr. Jack Cole
Dr. Ruth Fletcher
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, New Mexico

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION (IDEA) STATE ADVISORY PANELS: FACTORS OF PERCEIVED PANEL EFFECTIVENESS

The study of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) State Advisory Panels' perceived effectiveness employed survey research utilizing a stratified, random sample for the purpose of determining the factors that predicted panel members' perceived view of IDEA State Advisory Panels as effective. The research incorporated the nonmanipulated, independent factors of: (a) perceived compliance with legislative and regulatory mandates (PC), (b) perceived panel functions (PF), (c) perceived personal knowledge of special education law and regulations (PK), (d) perceived participant satisfaction (PS), and (e) perceived degree of mutual benefit derived from service on the panel (MB). Personal and panel demographics were investigated for possible correlations with perceived panel effectiveness. The personal information requested of each respondent was: (a) age, (b) gender, (c) ethnicity, (d) current occupation, and (e) highest educational level attained. The panel demographic data requested included: (a) number of panel members; (b) rural, urban or metropolitan residency of the respondent; (c) distances traveled in order to attend state panel meetings; (d) years of membership on the state panel; (e) offices held on the panel, if any; and (f) category of membership (group represented).

The study applied a research design involving qualitative methodology and quantitative data analysis. Qualitative methodology was used for the creation of the survey instrument while quantitative research principles guided the data collection and analysis of the survey. The study utilized qualitative research methodology of in-depth phenomenological interviews (Seidman, 1991), key informant interviews, participant observation, and document review (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The qualitative research methodology identified the following emerging themes: (a) proactive, reactive, or inactive panel, (b) leadership of the panel, (c) travel to attend panel meeting, (d) number and scheduling of meetings, (e) agendas, (f) purposes or goals for the panel, (g) satisfaction of the members, (h) membership, (i) mutual benefit from serving on the panel, and (j) effectiveness of the panel. The themes were combined with an extensive literature review to identify the five factors which might be predictive of IDEA state advisory panel member's perception of the panel as effective.

Following a review of Tests in Print III (Mitchell, 1983), it was determined that a valid instrument for the study did not exist. A survey instrument consisting of 34 content and 12 demographic questions prepared on a 4 point Likert-type scale was developed. The 34 content items were designed so that they: (a) followed a natural, random sequence; (b) were of reasonable length; (c) were clearly understandable; and (d) were eliciting objective responses (Miller, 1991). The questions were: (a) written in a straight forward, unambiguous manner; (b) carefully ordered, and (c) presented in a visually attractive manner (Dilman, Christensen, Carpenter, & Brooks, 1974; Rossi, Wright, & Anderson, 1983; Sudman & Bradburn, 1983). The third page of the questionnaire contained the demographic information.

The questionnaire was pilot tested in New Mexico on past members of New

Mexico's IDEA Advisory Panel (Rossi, Wright, & Anderson, 1983). These past members included IDEA panel State Director of Special Educations, administrators of special education programs, college professors, special education teachers, an individual with a disability, and a parent of an individual with a disability. The questionnaire was piloted to determine: (a) validity of the instrument, (b) clarity of presentation, (c) reliability of the instrument, (d) avoidance of biased questions, and (c) ease of administration. The results of the pilot testing were analyzed. Based upon the feedback from the individuals, revisions were made in the sequencing of the questions, the presentations of the questions, and the content of some of the questions. The feedback from the pilot testing verified the clarity of the content, the ease of administration, and the validity and reliability of the content (Rossi, Wright, & Anderson). A panel of experts reviewed the revised instrument. The panel of experts consisted of five professors, three in special education, one in general education, and one in survey research, from New Mexico State University.

The final questionnaire was prepared in agreement with the research of Dilman, Christensen, Carpenter, and Brooks (1974); Miller (1991); Orlich (1978); Rossi, Wright, and Anderson (1983); Sudman and Bradburn (1983); and Weisberg & Bowen (1977). The previous reviews conducted by the jury of experts as well as the results of the pilot testing aided in the preparation of the final questionnaire. To avoid a potential problem with response set, the sequence of questions were ordered so that 50% of the desired answers entailed a negative response (Weisberg & Bowen). The finalized questionnaire was printed on 11" x 17" 20 pound yellow paper. The questionnaire was folded into a 4 page, single fold, 8 1/2" x 11" booklet with the directions and items printed in black ink (Dilman et al.; Miller; Sudman & Bradburn). The return address was printed on the last page of the booklet to assist in a quick response rate (Sudman & Bradburn).

In 1990, Congress passed P.L. 101-476 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). One of the components of IDEA was the continuation of state advisory panels. According to the federal regulations for the implementation of IDEA, the panel membership is to include one person from each of the following groups: (a) individuals with disabilities, (b) teachers of individuals with disabilities, (c) parents of individuals with disabilities, (d) state and local educational officials, and (e) administrators of special education programs [34 CFR §300.651] (Aleman, 1991). The target population for the survey research was the 50 State IDEA Advisory Panels and the District of Columbia. The Special Education Director for each state provided a listing of the state's IDEA Advisory Panel Members. The lists were divided into subpopulations or stratas according to the membership representation mandated by IDEA: (a) individuals with disabilities, (b) teachers of individuals with disabilities, (c) family members of individuals with disabilities, (d) state and local education officials, (e) administrators of programs for individuals with disabilities, and (f) other members. The other member strata included: writers, housewives, nurses, librarians, social workers, medical personnel, psychologists, counselors, parent teacher association presidents, political analysis, and retired individuals. Table 1 provides the breakdown of the proportional representation of each membership category for the total population of state advisory panel members in 1996.

From the individual stratas, a random sample was selected in agreement with the proportional representation of the total population (Weisberg & Bowen, 1977). The random sample was selected using a Rand Table of Random Numbers (Rossi, Wright & Anderson, 1983; Sudman, 1976). This was not a census but a stratified, random sampling with an N = 200 from a total population of 965. Table 1 provides the breakdown of the proportional representation of each membership category for the stratified sample. The proportional representation of each membership category for the total population and the stratified sample were identical.

Table I
Membership Representation

Membership Category	Total Population		Sample Population	
	Membership Population	%	Membership Population	%
Indiv/Dis	73	07.5	15	07.5
Family Members	179	18.5	37	18.5
Teachers	173	17.9	36	17.9
Officials	179	18.5	37	18.5
Administrators	161	16.6	33	16.6
Others	200	20.7	42	20.7
Totals	965	99.7	200	99.7

On March 25, 1996, the initial survey and transmittal memorandum were mailed to each individual in the random, stratified sample of 200 IDEA advisory panel members. The transmittal memorandums were prepared on New Mexico State University letterhead (Dilman, Christensen, Carpenter, & Brooks, 1974; Response Analysis, 1981). Each memorandum was prepared for a specific mailing. They all contained deadline dates (Warwick & Lininger, 1975) and stressed the social usefulness of the study (Dilman et al.). In addition, the importance of each respondent to the success of the study was stressed (Dilman et al.) The initial mailing consisted of: (a) survey questionnaire, (b) transmittal memorandum on New Mexico State University letterhead, (c) support letter from the Executive Director of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), and (d) a dollar bill (Response Analysis, 1981) placed in a 9" x 12" envelope. The survey was printed on 11" x 17" yellow 20 pound paper folded into a four-page booklet (Miller, 1991; Sudman & Bradburn, 1982). Each survey carried a handwritten code which included an identification number (Sudman & Bradburn), the state, and the membership category of the individual. In an attempt to encourage a timely response the following three measures were taken.

1. The questionnaire was pre-stamped and addressed (Warwick & Lininger, 1975). Upon completion of the questionnaire, the respondents were only required to fold it, staple it, and drop it in a mailbox.
2. The initial mailing included a monetary token of appreciation in the form of a dollar bill (Response Analysis, 1981).
3. A drawing was held from the respondents returning their questionnaires by April 8, 1996 for a monetary prize of $100.00 (Fletcher, 1990).

On April 25, 1996, 87 nonrespondents to the initial mailing were sent the first follow-up memorandum and a self-addressed, stamped survey questionnaire on yellow paper (Heberlein & Baumgartner, 1978; Sewell & Shaw, 1978). On May 25, 1996, 46 nonrespondents were sent a second follow-up memorandum and a self-addressed, stamped survey questionnaire on blue paper. On June 28, 1996, a telephone call was placed to the remaining 31 nonvolunteering respondents by the researcher. During the telephone conversation, the status of the survey was determined. Twenty five individuals (12% of the total sample) stated that they were not going to complete the survey; while 7 individuals (3.5% of the total sample) agreed to answer the survey over the phone.

As noted on Table 2, following the initial mailing of 200 surveys, 113 were returned for an initial response rate of 57%. After the first follow-up memorandum, an additional 41 surveys were returned for a total response rate of 77%. The second follow-up letter netted 14 surveys for an overall response rate of 84%. The telephone contact resulted in 7 additional surveys for an overall final response rate of 88%.

Table 2
Rate of Response by Mailings

Mailing	Total # Mailed	Total # Returned	% Returned on Each Contact	Total % Returned	Total # Returned
INITIAL MAILING					
Individual	15	10	67		
Family	37	17	46		
Teacher	36	23	64		
Official	37	19	51		
Administrator	33	23	70		
Other	42	21	50		
TOTALS	200	113	57	57	
FIRST FOLLOW UP					
Individual	5	2	40		
Family	20	9	45		
Teacher	13	5	38		
Official	18	10	56		
Administrator	10	8	80		
Other	21	7	33		
TOTALS	87	41	47	77	
SECOND FOLLOW UP					
Individual	3	1	33		
Family	11	5	45		
Teacher	8	2	25		
Official	8	0	00		
Administrator	2	0	00		
Other	14	6	43		
TOTALS	46	14	30	84	
TELEPHONE FOLLOW UP					
Individual	2	1	50	93	14
Family	5	1	20	86	32
Teacher	6	1	17	86	31
Official	8	0	00	78	29
Administrator	2	1	50	97	32
Other	8	3	38	86	37
TOTALS	31	7	23	88	175

In the study the nonmanipulated, predictive variables of: (a) perceived panel compliance with legislative and regulatory panel mandates (PC), (b) perceived panel fulfillment of organizational functions (PF), (c) perceived personal knowledge of special education law and regulations (PK), (d) perceived participant satisfaction (PS), and (e) perceived mutual benefit (MB) were correlated with the dependent variable, perceived panel effectiveness. The following hypothesis was developed for the study.

> For the population of state IDEA Advisory Panel members, perceived panel's compliance with legislative and regulatory mandates (PC), perceived fulfillment of panel functions (PF), perceived member's

> personal knowledge of special education law and regulations (PK), perceived panel participant's satisfaction (PS), and perceived panel member's mutual benefit (MB) are predictive of the IDEA panel members' perceptions of panel effectiveness (PE).

The study employed survey research to accept or fail to accept the research hypothesis. The study attempted to minimize the threat of confounding variables that could influence the survey results by: (a) employing random selection, (b) stratifying results by levels of environmental or personological variables, and (c) collecting information with a neutral and unbiased questionnaire (Gay, 1987; Moore, 1983). Individual item omission was noted in the computer data. When more than 50% of the items were omitted the survey was removed from the data base. Two surveys (1% of the total sample) were missing more than 50% of the data. The data analysis utilized percentage analysis of the responses for the content and demographic questions, Pearson Product Correlation, Analysis of Variance, Fisher Exact and multiple linear regression. The responses of the nonvolunteering individuals were analyzed separately from the volunteered responses. There were no statistical differences in the responses of seven nonvolunteering respondents when compared to the total sample population.

Based upon the results of the study, the predictive models for perceived panel effectiveness are:

1 variable model: Perceived Panel Compliance
2 variable model: Perceived Panel Compliance, Perceived Participant Satisfaction
3 variable model: Perceived Panel Compliance, Perceived Participant Satisfaction, and Perceived Panel Functions

The members' perception of panel compliance of legislative and regulatory mandates is the most predictive factor of perceived panel effectiveness. Perceived participant satisfaction (i.e., the member's perceived view of their satisfaction as a panel member) when combined with perceived panel compliance is the best two variable predictive model. The final predictive model of perceived panel effectiveness is the combination of perceived panel compliance, perceived participant satisfaction, and perceived fulfillment of panel functions (i.e., utilization of agendas, scheduling of meetings, mailing of minutes, participating members, and completing tasks).

The demographic results indicate the typical IDEA state advisory panel member is white, female, and 46 years of age. She resides in an urban setting, works in the field of education, and has a masters degree. She has served on the panel for three years. The typical panel has 20 members who travel an average of 161 miles to attend the meetings. For a typical panel of 20 members, there would be 1 individual with disabilities (8%), 4 family members of individuals with disabilities (18%), 3 teachers of individuals with disabilities (17%), 4 state and local education officials (18%), 3 administrators of programs for individuals with disabilities (17%), and 5 other members (21%).

Based upon the results of the study panel compliance (PC) is predictive of perceived panel effectiveness. This results supports the works of Brawer (1980), Brown (1982), Duganne-Glicksman and Dutton (1988), and Parry-Hill (1981). For the respondents of the survey, panel compliance is the most significant variable in their perception of the panel as effective. If the panel is perceived as fulfilling the legal and legislative mandates, then the panel will be perceived as effective.

The findings of the study support the research of Bedelan (1984), Caple and Cox (1989), Dimock (1987), Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnely (1979), and Napier and Gershenfeld (1981) in the area of participant satisfaction. Perceived participant satisfaction (PS) is the next variable of significance in the respondents' perception of panel effectiveness. The recommendation for State Director of Special Education, based upon the study results, is to guide the panel so that the members are satisfied in their roles as members. If members are satisfied in their work on the panel, then they will perceive the panel as effective.

The final significant variable is perceived panel functions (PF). The findings of the study substantiate the research of Beckwith (1981), Gallon and Wattenbarger (1976), and Parry-Hill (1981) in the area of panel functions as indicators of panel effectiveness. Based upon the results of the study, the recommendation for State Director of Special Education is to be conscientious in: (a) involving all members, (b) encouraging attendance, (c) motivating completion of assigned tasks, (d) organizing distribution of minutes, (e) assigning regular meeting times, and (f) utilizing agendas at meetings. The fulfillment of these functions lead members to view the panel as effective.

The demographic results indicate a range of panel members from 7 to 50 with a mean of 20. The size of the panel is statistically significant (0.0421) to the perception of the panel as effective based upon the analysis of variance at an alpha level of 0.05. The research of Dimock (1987) and Kemp (1964) indicates that smaller panels are more effective. In contrast, IDEA study indicates that size is correlated to perceived panel effectiveness, but the panels were larger than the committees sited in Dimock and Kemp's research. In the study the level of educational attainment is statistically significant (0.04 at an alpha of 0.05) to the perception of panel effectiveness. According to the survey results, 161 respondents have more than 13 years of education, with 12 respondents having less than 13 years of education, and the mean educational level is a master degree. The study appears to support the research of Curtis, Grabb, and Baer (1992) which indicates that individuals with 13 years of more of education have a higher membership rate than individuals with less than 13 years of education.

In summary, the study of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) State Advisory Panels employed survey research utilizing a stratified, random sample of 200 panel members for the purpose of determining the factors that predicted of the member's perception of panel effectiveness. The research incorporated the nonmanipulated, independent variables of perceived compliance with legislative and regulatory mandates, perceived panel functions, perceived personal knowledge of special education law and regulations, perceived participant satisfaction, and perceived degree of mutual benefit derived from service on the panel. The results indicate that perceived panel compliance is the most predictive model of perceived panel effectiveness. Perceived participant satisfaction and perceived panel functions also indicate significant correlation with perceived panel effectiveness. The recommendations for State Director of Special Education based upon the study results include: (a) providing members with the knowledge of how the panel is in compliance with legislative and regulatory mandates, (b) providing a free and understanding environment in which the members can accomplish their duties, thus increasing participant satisfaction, (c) providing for the smooth functioning of the panel in completing its responsibilities, (d) providing membership recruitment without an overwhelming concern to limit the size of the panel to seven to ten members, and (e) providing membership recruitment of individuals with an awareness of the individuals level of educational attainment.

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Gwen Schroth, Texas A&M-Commerce
Commerce, Texas
Mary Ann Moorman, Greenville ISD
Greenville, Texas
Harry Fullwood, Texas A&M-Commerce
Commerce, Texas

EFFECTS OF TRAINING ON TEACHER'S STAGES OF CONCERN REGARDING INCLUSION

Inclusion is defined by Roach (1995) as the provision of educational services to students with a full range of abilities and disabilities in the general education classroom with appropriate in-class support. This philosophical stance is in sharp contrast to the traditional concept of "mainstreaming" where students with disabilities are placed in general education classes for part of the school day while maintaining their home-base in special education. With "mainstreaming," placement in the regular education setting is tolerated with the knowledge that the child will return to the special education classroom after a specified period of time.

The implementation of an inclusive philosophy forces a profound shift from the "mainstream" paradigm. Teachers must come to grips with the belief that students with disabilities belong in the general education setting. Membership in regular classes is not a privilege, but a right. Bias in the "mainstreaming" philosophy unwittingly nurtures the belief that children with disabilities do not belong, a belief challenged by inclusion. Teachers are asked to redefine their view of how the system should respond to students with disabilities, which can be a painful process for many educators.

In the Greenville Independent School District, an average-sized school district in Northeast Texas, an attempt was made to smooth the transition from the traditional exclusionary model to inclusive classrooms. Empowered by the Special Education Director, special education teachers spent a year planning and implementing inclusion in the style they felt was appropriate for their particular district.

Prior to the experiment, a dual system of education existed in Greenville. The general education teachers took care of the majority of the students and the special education teachers taught the special education students. Time spent in the general education setting was dependent on whether the student was "ready" for regular education and the regular teacher was simply expected to make the transition work.

Of the myriad problems encountered in moving to an inclusive model, changing attitudes and beliefs is particularly troublesome. In Greenville, many special education teachers appeared to doubt the advantages of inclusion for students; for some the new role as a collaborator and supporter of regular education teachers was foreign. The Special Education Director realized that supporting the special education teachers through this change process was an urgent concern and decided to implement an empowerment model to make the transition more successful. Outside facilitators were employed to apply a process approach to change.

Described here are 1) the key issues surrounding change, 2) a description of the Change Facilitator Stages of Concerns Questionnaire used to measure changes in teachers' concerns regarding inclusion during the year in which the interventions took place, 3) the details of the teachers' activities surrounding inclusion, and 4) a report of teachers' concerns as measured by the CBAM Questionnaire.

CHANGE

Change is a process that occurs over a period of time rather than a single event which we can attribute to a particular day or moment (Cuban, 1988; Fullan, 1991; Fullan and Miles, 1992). A number of models have been developed to measure and explain what exactly occurs during the change process. Most of these models describe change as a series of phases in which the vents in one part of the process inform and impact the decisions made at another phase (Guier, 1997). One model that measure teachers' concerns about change is the Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) which resulted from research conducted over twenty years (Hall & Hord, 1987; Hord, et al., 1991). The Change Facilitator Stages of Concerns Questionnaire (CFSoCQ) created by the same researchers is designed to document change in levels of concern teachers have about change during the implementation of an innovation and was the instrument used in the study described here.

Levels of Concern Hord, et al identify seen stages of concern that users of an innovation may have. These include: a)Stage 0-Awareness Concerns, b) Stage 1-Informational Concerns, c) Personal Concerns, d) Stage 3-Management Concerns, e) Stage 4-Consequence Concerns, f) Stage 5-Collaboration Concerns, and g) Stage 6-

Refocusing Concerns. To obtain a reading of individual's concerns, CFSoCQ requires respondents to indicate their attitudes about an innovation by marking 35 items on a 0 to 7 Likert scale according to how accurately the items describe the respondent's current feeling about the innovation. The items represent seven stages of concern, 5 items for each stage. Raw scores for each stage are converted to percentile scores and arrayed on a Stages of Concern profile. For this study, raw scores were averaged for each group (see Tables 1 & 2).

While the Stages of Concern vary in intensity, Guier (1997) describes teachers' progress toward full implementation as beginning with little concern about their involvement with an innovation, then moving to a stage where they are concerned about how the innovation will affect them personally, and finally, shifting to task-related concerns. In the last stage, the innovation is institutionalized, teachers are comfortable with the change and their concern is for exploring more universal benefits from the innovation.

If special education teachers were to move in a logical progression through the levels of concern during the implementation of inclusion one would expect that, when special education directors begin to discuss the concept, the teachers' level of concern is minimal. As the director, principals, and central office administration support the change and special education teachers understand that inclusion is inevitable, the teachers' levels of concern shift and teachers begin to wonder how inclusion is going to affect their own classrooms, how they will manage to help children with disabilities in regular classrooms, and what the consequences will be for all the children. Finally, once inclusion is implemented, teachers' concerns center on how special education and regular classroom teachers can combine their efforts for the optimal good of the students. They might be concerned about matters beyond their own situations such as how they can conduct workshops to help others successfully implement inclusion. Progression toward inclusion is unlikely to occur in an orderly manner but is likely to fluctuate as barriers are encountered, as anxiety increases and decreases, and as enthusiasm waxes and wanes. The study described here involved special education teachers and their efforts to effectively implement inclusion in their own district. The teachers' levels of concern were monitored throughout the study using the CFSoCQ.

THE PROCESS

Because the success of any innovation depends largely on the interest and involvement of those most impacted by the change (Guier, 1997), all aspects of this study began with the teachers. The Greenville special education teachers (the Training Group) met, formed a vision, planned, and conducted the activities with support, and little interference, from their Director.

Phase One During the summer, the Special Education Director, the special education teachers, and the two change facilitators spent an entire day discussing inclusion. Of the 26 teachers involved a) 25 hold valid teaching certificates, b) 21 hold Generic Special Education certificates, c) 17 had previous inclusion training, while 8 reported no previous training, d) of the 17 reporting inclusion training, 10 received it from district inservices, 14 from Regional Service Centers, 4 from university courses, 11 from workshops, and 1 from another source. Included in the subject population were an administrator, 3 supervisors, a speech pathologist and 3 educational diagnosticians.

Dividing the subjects into two groups (A and B), the facilitators used the Nominal Group Technique, a Du Pont Leadership Training Tool (1993), to guide the groups in forming a vision of what inclusion should look like in Greenville Independent School District. After several hours of discussion, sorting, and consensus building, Group A outlined the following vision. "To continue improvement of inclusion in Greenville it would be ideal to: 1. Have an understanding and support among administrators and staff regarding inclusion; 2. Have a concrete plan to implement and evaluate inclusion, and 3. Have all the staff resources and training in place to implement the plan."

Group B's vision was similar. "To continue improvement of inclusion in Greenville it would be ideal to: Have enough money and time to provide training and staffing for collaboration; 2. Have a consensus by all on direction and implementation of successful inclusion; 3. Have a team that trains together to have the same understanding in order to collaborate with regard to individuality, consisting of community and school representatives."

Following this meeting the CFSoCQ was administered to the Training Group and to a Control Group made up of special education teachers in a neighboring comparable district. Of the 14 teachers in the Control Group, a) 13 hold valid teaching certificates, b) 12 hold Generic Special Education certificates, c) 10 had previous inclusion training while 4 reported no previous training, d) of the 10 reporting inclusion training, 1 received it from district inservices, 5 from Regional Service Centers, 3 from university courses, 5 from workshops.

For the Training Group and the Control Group, the raw scores for each Stage of Concern were averaged to obtain a single profile (see Table 1). The profiles of the two groups are similar with teachers showing high concern about information issues and personal demands of inclusion, and some concern for how inclusion will be managed. Less concern was expressed by both groups for the consequences of inclusion for students, how inclusion could be used by others or for exploring universal benefits of the innovation. Hall, George, and Rutherford (1986) describe this type of profile as commonly found in those who are nonusers of an innovation where teachers are somewhat aware of and concerned about the innovation.

Phase Two Early in the school year and in accordance with the vision formed during the summer, the Greenville teachers met to develop a plan for achieving their vision. Group A worked on a model for training administrators and teachers in their district, while Group B developed a plan to educate shareholders on what the teachers were currently doing. Group A began their work by researching and benchmarking. They gathered and shared journal articles about inclusion, and then spent some time visiting each others' campuses as well as some outside the district to gain a clearer picture of what needed to be done. Group B began work on a video tape of inclusion in their schools to use when informing teachers, parents, students, administrators, board members, and support staff of what inclusion entails.

Following this Phase, at mid-year, the CFSoCQ was again administered to the Greenville teachers and to the Control Group. Table 2 shows that, while the Control Group's Levels of Concern were still similar to their Levels at the beginning of the school year, those of the Training Group (Greenville) had changed. Their Stage 4 Level dropped, indicating that the intensity of their concern for the consequences of inclusion for students had decreased since the beginning of the year (Pre=43, post=33).

Hord, et. al., (1991) suggest interventions useful for allaying concerns at each stage. To alleviate concerns regarding consequences of an innovation (Stage 4), the following are suggested: a) provide individuals with opportunities to visit other settings; b) give support, c) find opportunities for sharing skills, and d) share information pertaining to the innovation. The Greenville Training Group engaged in these four activities occurred during Phase 2 which is reflected in their reported levels of concern regarding inclusion.

While the study is still in progress, it is predicted that the teachers in Greenville and the Control Group will continue to vary in their concerns about inclusion due to the interventions. At mid-year, inspection of preliminary results suggests change in the 4th Stage of Concern (Consequences) for the Training Group but not for the Control Group. This finding does support the expected direction as identified by Hord et al (1991). The Training Groups' concerns are expected to move from Awareness to Refocusing, a change which may or may not fully occur by years' end but will be worth monitoring for several years. If the techniques used here prove to enable successful implementation of inclusion, they are worth noting. Other districts might also find empowerment of special education teachers a path worth following.

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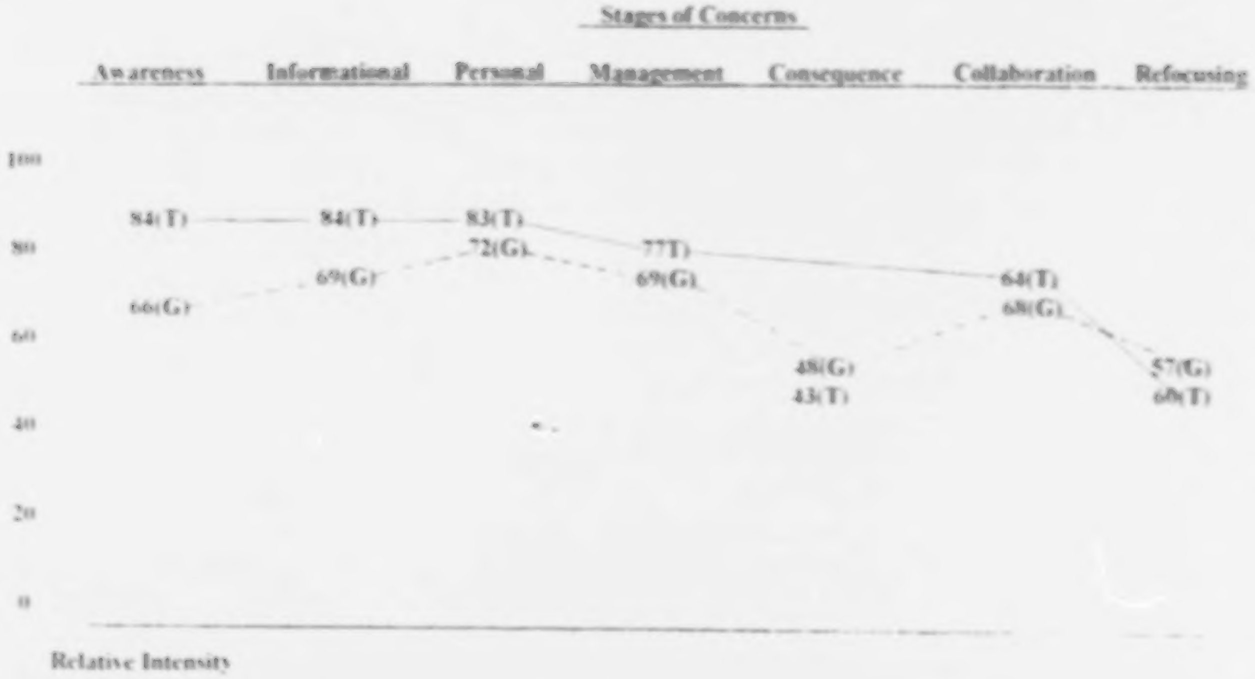
Table 1

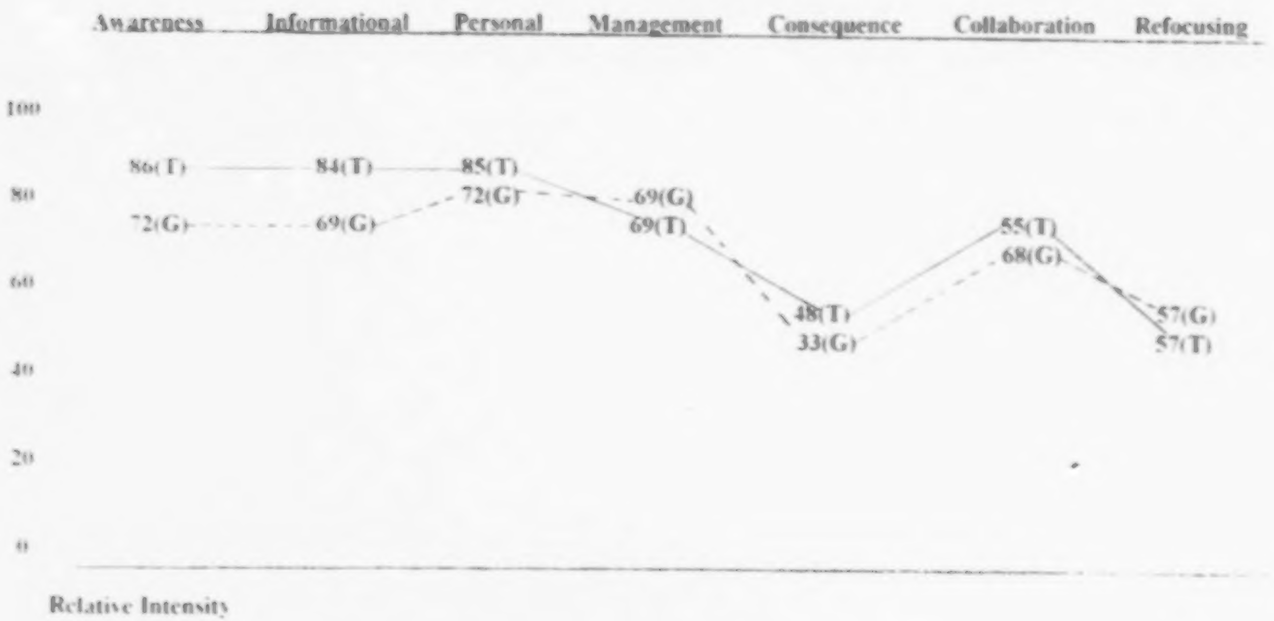
Initial Levels of Concern for Inclusion within two groups before training



N(G)=Training Group of teachers N(T)=Control Group of teachers

Table 2

Initial Levels of Concern for Inclusion within two groups
after training(mid-year)



N(G)=Training Group of teachers N(T)=Control Group of teachers

Landa J. Iverson, Ph.D.
Janice A. Chavez, Ph.D.
California State University, Fresno
Fresno, California

A COMPARISON OF RURAL AND URBAN SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER NEEDS IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIOR DISORDERS

Teaching children with emotional and behavior disorders can be challenging, particularly in rural areas. The National Rural and Small Schools Consortium (NRSSC) defined a rural school district as a continuum represented by multiple subcultures which includes the interaction of topography, population sparsity, and community or district characteristics (Helge, 1984). Helge (1983) stated that two-thirds (67%) of all school districts are classified as rural. These schools are frequently forced to hire unqualified personnel through temporary certifications. Helge (1984) also found that the hiring standards for rural personnel was lower than the hiring standards for the non-rural areas. In 1981, Helge surveyed special education administrators in 22 states and found that recruiting special education teachers was the most significant problem faced in rural school districts.

Approximately 14 years later, school administrators continue to identify the problem of attracting and retaining qualified personnel as the major difficulty in providing services to special education students (Lembke, 1995). Lembke further cited Henry (1986) who found that behavior management and student discipline are two primary reasons why teachers leave the profession. These same two areas surfaced in the literature in the area of behavior disorders as to why teachers working with emotional and/or behavioral disordered (EBD) students do not remain in their teaching positions.

When attempting to provide appropriate special education services in rural areas to children with EBD, administrators rely on colleges and universities to certify that preservice teachers have attained a level of professional competency. Several preservice models were developed specifically to train teachers to work with children with EBD in rural areas. Iverson, Johnson, and Harlow (1992) designed a preventative rural teacher preparation program that offered general education teachers and administrators intensive training in working more effectively with EBD students. Similarly, Joyce and Wienke (1988) trained teachers with minimal background in behavior disorders on the primary competencies of behavior management and curricular instruction. In a related study, Peterson and Maddux (1988) surveyed perceptions of general and special educators toward educating children who demonstrate hyperactive behavior. They found that both general and special education teachers felt that possessing specific skills in teaching and managing behaviors were important in minimizing distractions, setting clear expectations and rules, and the effective use of time out procedures.

Method

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to determine the similarities and differences between urban and rural special education teachers and their knowledge and skill levels across 13 EBD competency areas as originally identified by the Center for Quality Special Education (1990) and the Council for Exceptional Children (1992). These competencies included characteristics of learners, assessment and diagnosis of EBD, instructional content and practice, managing the learning environment, managing student behavior, transitions, monitoring and evaluation, cultural and linguistic diversity, communication and collaboration, families, community resources, legal and administrative structure, and professional and ethical practice.

Participants

Participants in this study were 58 graduate students enrolled in special education courses at California State University at Fresno. These teachers were concurrently employed in special education classrooms in both rural and urban settings. The sample was comprised of 44 female and 14 male students with a mean age of 35.3 years. Self-reports of ethnicity included 69.1% Caucasian, 23.2% Hispanic, 5.4% African American, and 1.8% Asian American. College degrees and teaching credentials held by the participants are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Percent of Degrees and Credentials Completed

Degree/Credential	Percent
Bachelors Degree Completed	
Liberal Arts	38.6
Specific Academic (e.g., biology)	59.7
Teaching Credential Held	
Special Education Internship	25.0
Elementary Education	67.2
Secondary Education	20.7
Bilingual Education	6.9
Emergency Special Education	32.8
Clear Special Education	17.2
Other	15.5

The majority of the participants held a specific academic degree (59.7%) or a Liberal Arts bachelor's degree (38.6%). Elementary education teaching credentials were held by 67.2% as compared to 20.7% in secondary education, 6.9% in bilingual education, and 15.5% in other certificates and authorizations. Approximately 58% of special education teachers were employed under emergency credentials and 17.2% possessed a professional special education credential.

Fifty-five percent of the participants were employed in urban school districts, 42.6% were employed in rural districts, and 2.4% were unknown. The average teaching experience was 1.7 years and the average number of special education graduate credits completed was 21.4.

Instrument

The instrument was designed to elicit demographic information and participant responses to the Emotionally and Behaviorally Disordered (EBD) Teacher Competencies Assessment (Institute for Adolescents with Behavior Disorders, 1994). Participants completed demographic information which included sex, ethnicity, age, credentials/degrees held, completed special education course units, and identification of their school district as urban or rural.

The EBD Teacher Competencies Assessment was administered to the participants and were requested to identify their proficiency levels in knowledge and skill using a 5-point likert scale indicating a 1 = none or little, 2 = somewhat, 3 = moderate, 4 = strong, or 5 = mastery across all 13 competency areas.

Results

The results provided several interesting findings. Mean scores in both the rural and urban teacher groups were tabulated for knowledge and skill levels in each competency area and for overall proficiency. In general, results indicated that special education teachers in rural and urban settings rated their knowledge (M=2.89; M=2.91) and skill (M=3.05; M=3.21) proficiency in the moderate level as reflected in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Knowledge, Skill, and Combined Scores by Competency

Competency Area	Knowledge	Skill
Characteristics of Learners	2.80	2.65
Assessment/Diagnosis of EBD	2.65	3.19
Instructional Content and Practice	3.25	3.45
Managing Learning Environment	3.57	3.52
Managing Student Behavior	3.01	3.25
Transitions	2.59	2.72
Monitoring and Evaluation	3.10	2.65
Cultural and Linguistic Diversity	3.23	3.62
Communication and Collaboration	3.17	3.24
Families	2.90	3.00
Community Resources	2.55	2.54
Legal and Administrative Structure	2.86	2.73
Professional and Ethical Practice	2.58	3.44
Overall Proficiency	2.94	3.08

In overall proficiency and overall knowledge proficiency, both rural and urban teachers rated the competencies of managing the learning environment, instructional content and practice, and cultural and linguistic diversity the highest relative to other competencies. The lowest scores in knowledge proficiency included transitions (M=2.47; M=2.54), professional and ethical practice (M=2.25; M=2.69) and community resources (M=2.47; M=2.55) for both teacher groups. The teachers' skill proficiency was rated highest in cultural and linguistic diversity (M=3.58; M=3.74), managing the learning environment (M=3.71; M=3.41), and instructional content and practice (M=3.58; M=3.36) for both groups. Rural and urban teachers identified community resources (M=2.48) M=2.56) as their lowest skill area; whereas, rural teachers selected characteristics of learners (M=2.46) and transitions (M=2.54) as their lowest skill competencies and urban teachers selected professional and ethical practices (M=2.58) and monitoring and evaluation (M=2.71) as their lowest skill competencies. Both teacher groups agreed that their lowest overall proficiency was in community resources (M=2.47; M=2.55), transitions (M=2.50; M=2.65), and characteristics of learners (M=2.61; M=2.81).

T-tests for independent samples were conducted on ethnicity (Caucasian and noncaucasian), age (20-34 years and over 35 years), school district (rural and urban), teaching experience in special education (less than 2 years and more than 2 years), and special education course units (under 21 units and over 21 units). Results of ethnicity, age, urban and rural school district, and teaching experience indicated no significant difference between the means for each of the independent variables as illustrated in Table 3.

TABLE 3
T-tests for Independent Samples-Ethnicity, Age, School District, and Teaching Experience

Variable	Mean	SD	t-value
Caucasian	3.13	.603	
Non Caucasian	3.01	.683	.57
20-34 years	3.08	.666	
35+ years	3.06	.590	.12
Rural	3.06	.550	
Urban	3.11	.793	.22
Less than 2 years	2.99	.632	
Over 2 years	3.23	.632	-1.26
Under 21 units	3.06	.601	
Over 21 units	3.10	.655	-.19

Dependent samples t-tests were computed between rural and urban teacher's knowledge and skill in each of the competency areas and in overall proficiency. No significant differences were found between rural and urban special education teachers and knowledge, skill, and overall proficiency (see Table 4).

TABLE 4

T-values between Urban and Rural Groups Across Competency Area

Competency Area	Level	Mean	SD	t-value
Characteristics of Learners	Urban	2.81	.864	
	Rural	2.61	.557	.94
Assessment and Diagnosis	Urban	2.95	.906	
	Rural	3.87	.716	.33
Instructional Content and Practice	Urban	3.31	.808	
	Rural	3.47	.480	-.84
Managing Learning Environment	Urban	3.47	.728	
	Rural	3.67	.534	1.00
Managing Student Behavior	Urban	3.18	.871	
	Rural	3.11	.579	.28
Transitions	Urban	2.65	.896	
	Rural	2.50	.864	.53
Monitoring and Evaluation	Urban	2.95	.971	
	Rural	2.86	.821	.34
Cultural and Language Diversity	Urban	3.47	.924	
	Rural	3.36	.867	.40
Communication and Collaboration	Urban	3.31	.830	
	Rural	3.09	.820	.86
Families	Urban	2.95	.932	
	Rural	2.93	1.034	-.83
Community Resources	Urban	2.55	1.024	
	Rural	2.47	.983	.26
Legal and Administrative Structure	Urban	2.88	.994	
	Rural	2.64	1.084	.75
Professional and Ethical Practice	Urban	3.14	.89	
	Rural	2.78	.85	1.34
Overall Knowledge Proficiency	Urban	2.91	.831	
	Rural	2.89	.685	.07
Overall Skill Proficiency	Urban	3.21	.791	
	Rural	3.05	.588	.70
Overall Proficiency	Urban	3.11	.793	
	Rural	3.06	.550	.22

* $p < .05$

Discussion

Serving students with EBD is a challenge for teachers who have minimal training and limited experience in special education. California is currently facing a severe special education teacher shortage and as a result a large number of uncertified teachers are employed by school districts to teach the most difficult students. Teachers instructing students with EBD should be grounded in best practice which requires knowledge and skills in appropriate procedures and curriculum (Whelan & Simpson, 1996). In order to investigate teacher perceptions in relation to identified competencies, various knowledge and skill areas in the professional field of educating students with EBD need to be considered.

This study revealed several findings. Special education teachers in rural and urban settings expressed that they had a moderate grasp of knowledge and skill competence in teaching students with EBD. Both rural and urban teachers were most knowledgeable and skilled in managing the learning environment, instructional content and practice and cultural and linguistic diversity relative to other competencies. These instructional and diversity competencies appeared to be adequately addressed in preservice coursework, inservice training, or on-the-job experience. In the sample, approximately 30% of the special education teachers were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Within the regional rural and urban school districts, students with EBD also share the same backgrounds as their teachers. In this context, it is not surprising that these teachers would perceive themselves as being adequately prepared to address the diversity issues in their classrooms. From these results, it is apparent that whether a teacher works in a rural or urban school their needs appear to be similar. Although teachers in the sample expressed that they received adequate training in instructional content and practice and in diversity issues the results did not indicate they had reached the mastery level.

Rural and urban special education teachers reported below average knowledge in addressing vocational transition needs, awareness of professional and ethical standards, and identifying and utilizing community resources, and below average skills in utilizing community resources. The rural and urban teacher groups differed from one another in their identification of their lowest skill competencies. Rural teachers selected characteristics of learners and vocational transition competencies as their lowest skill areas, while urban teachers selected professional and ethical practices and monitoring and evaluation as their lowest skills relative to other competencies.

The central valley of California shares similar problems of personnel shortage as other parts of the state. Its agrarian economy and rural nature provides additional challenges to teachers and training institutions that serve these teachers. As with other urban areas of the state, rural teachers have not acquired the level of knowledge and skills necessary to effectively serve students with multiple needs. Although no significant differences were found between rural and urban special education teachers in this study, these results indicate that special education teachers, in general, do not feel they had reached a level of mastery when working with EBD students.

These findings have implications to teacher training programs serving teachers employed under emergency credentials. The examination of alternative certification models, such as internship programs, is critical to the identification of effective teacher preparation models. In these programs, special education teachers merge theory (what they have learned through coursework) with practice (application of this knowledge in their classroom). A bridge between knowledge and skills is established as specific teaching competencies are applied and evaluated in the classroom situation. A strong grounding in these essential competencies is critical to the success of the special education teachers and the student with emotional and behavioral disorders.

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Authors: Steve Street and Dennis Bennett
Institutions: University of Nevada, Reno &
Clive School, County of Lacombe # 14
Locations: Reno, NV., USA & Clive, Alberta, Canada

BEST PRACTICES IN RURAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT: THE CLIVE SCHOOL STORY

Setting the Stage for Implementing Change

In Sergiovanni's (1989) ideas regarding professional knowledge, he elaborates on Kozlov's concept of mindscapes, a metaphor for educational viewpoints. There are three primary mindscapes that guide educators as they engage in the application of professional knowledge. These mindscapes are identified as Mystics, Neats, and Scruffies. Sergiovanni's (1991, p. 4) concept of mindscapes serves as a point of reference for teachers as they apply their professional knowledge to the art of teaching. Mystics see education as a non-science where theory and research have little relevance to professional practice. Neats view education as an applied science totally connected to theory, research and the resulting practices of teachers in the classroom. Scruffies, unlike Mystics and Neats, express their teaching in the form of a practical, craftlike science. Scruffies are the practioners of education.

Theory and practice are also important to Scruffies, but only as one of many sources of information. Theory and research don't prescribe practice, they enhance practice. Sergiovanni's Scruffies first reflect and then act upon important information. Schon (1983) and Blumberg (1989) reinforce the critical value of reflective practice. Schon's (p.50) construct of "knowing-in-action" is the actual behavior displayed by the educator as she thinks, reflects, decides, acts. The resulting informed teacher behaviors are applied in the context of "practioners dealing with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflicts." According to Schon, teaching is a "messy business." Reflective practices like knowing-in-action broadens the practical, craftlike science of teaching. Blumberg's ideas regarding "the art like craft of teaching" describe how the mind, heart, and head produces useful things. Blumberg describes this teacher action as having a "refined nose for things."

Inherent in each of these teacher reflective behavior explanations is the ultimate goal of empowering teachers to become more Scruffy-like in their teaching. The very points Sergiovanni, Schon, and Blumberg make in their ideas surrounding the Scruffies "knowing-in-action craftlike behaviors", served as the primary foundation for the Clive School Story. As the details unfold describing how Clive School teachers became involved in the use of best practices in staff development to expand their professional knowledge, each phase of the program was constantly viewed through the lens of practical applications influenced but not driven by theory and research. The staff had to see the value inherent in the development of their professional knowledge as a response to need, not as a top-to-bottom directive for change. They indeed did see this need and the results have been very positive for staff and students alike.

The Clive School Story: The Beginning

In the fall of 1989, the County of Lacombe # 14 in Alberta, Canada, hired a new resource specialist teacher. He was assigned to an itinerant special education position equally split between Clive School and another school 15 minutes down the road. At this juncture in the "new" resource teacher's career, he had previously availed himself of three different types of special education teaching experiences. In his first year of public school pre-PL 94-142 teaching, he served in a pre-school program for high risk 3-5 year olds. The next 8 years were devoted to grades 1-12 as a resource teacher in three different learning communities. These classroom experiences plus 8 years as an educational specialist in a statewide staff development program for the state of California, created a catalyst for asking the hard question: "Isn't there a better way to enhance the learning of students who learn differently?" The answer to this question is a hearty yes!

At Clive School, through the courage and educational leadership of Mr. Marv Pickering, Principal and Mr. Dennis Bennett, Assistant Principal of Clive School, a new direction for meeting the educational needs of students with identified learning differences was launched. The new direction was to disband the traditional special education pull-out program and implement co-teaching partnerships between the classroom and the resource specialist teacher. Through the use of co-teaching partnerships, a teacher's professional knowledge would expand and mature. This new way of thinking and behaving would be ignited by incorporating the best practices of staff development into a longitudinal professional development program.

My name is Steve Street. I am that resource teacher and with Dennis Bennett, the current principal of Clive School, we will share how our school's utilization of the best practices of staff development resulted in success for the staff and students of Clive School. We refer to this professional development (PD) adventure as The Clive School Story.

Clive School in Clive, Alberta, Canada is a rural Early Childhood (kindergarten) to grade nine school serving approximately 280 students who live in the eastern portion of the County of Lacombe. At the time of this study, the Clive School staff consisted of 12 educators; one for each of the 10 grades, a teaching principal, and a resource teacher. The village of Clive is approximately halfway between Calgary and Edmonton. In this rolling farmland rich in agriculture, cow-calf farming operations, and petroleum wells, the driving time from Clive to either of the two primary urban centers is approximately two hours, unless of course the roads are closed due to ice, snow or white-out conditions with temperatures at -35 degrees Celsius. In a phrase, Clive School fits the criteria of a rural learning community and indeed, it is this key characteristic which has enhanced the development of a school culture focused on the number one responsibility of public education, serving its students.

Since September 1989, the staff at Clive School has formally been involved in developing their school into a Cooperative Learning Demonstration School. Cooperative Learning (CL) is the primary teaching strategy which totally changed the special education program at Clive School. The theory, research, and practical tools of CL fit extremely well with the concepts and practices outlined above by Sergiovanni, Schon, and Blumberg.

As a resource teacher, I often see learning and teaching differently from the general education teacher. My way isn't better; it's simply another perspective on teaching and learning. I am influenced more by the processes of learning a student acquires, rather than what a student learns. When I was hired as the new resource teacher for Clive School, the principal, Mr. Marv Pickering, encouraged me to do different things in the special education program. At this time in special education, the concept of mainstreaming was quite popular. Mainstreaming functions on the premise that a student who is found eligible for special education resources and services, should spend some time with their peers in the general education classroom. On the other hand, the new special education concept making in-roads into public school thinking was inclusion. Inclusion's point of reference is different than that of mainstreaming. Inclusion's focus starts within the general education classroom before consideration is given to taking the student out for assistance. Students with special education needs can thrive in this least restrictive environment when the classroom teacher's professional knowledge is enriched with tools and strategies that not only serve students with unique learning differences, but other students who are also in need and fail to officially qualify for direct special education support.

At the very first staff meeting in September 1989, I offered to do some teaching in the general education classroom in order to "see first hand how my students with special needs responded to the general education environment." I was particularly interested in how students with special needs responded to the general education teacher's oral and written directions, the expectations regarding student behavior and the social skills of all students as they worked together. Equally important, I wanted to establish some credibility as a teacher with my new colleagues. In my previous special education teaching assignments, I often heard remarks like, "what do you really know about teaching, you only see 4 or 5 students at any one time?" Before the staff at Clive School would seriously consider me as a "resource" teacher, I had to establish credibility as a teacher first. The only way to establish credibility with a classroom teacher is to teach in a general education classroom. In this experience, I had the opportunity to showcase some of the basic tools and strategies of CL. The teachers liked these and wanted to know more about CL. The unexpected payoff for me was gleaning some insights into the classroom teacher's expectations for her students. Instead of being segregated down the hall in my resource room guessing at how the general education classroom was managed, I now knew first hand. This assisted me greatly in shaping my students IEP goals in the context of successful learning in the natural learning environment, the general education classroom.

It was a new experience for Clive staff to consider having the resource teacher as a co-teaching partner in their classroom. In this new way of doing things, I would be available to directly support the teacher as she worked with my students with special needs as well as those who weren't identified but required some additional assistance. Not all teachers participated in this new idea, however three teachers did volunteer for the co-teaching partnerships. As a result of their experiences, these three teachers encouraged others to participate. In fact, one of the best measures of the program's success, is best illustrated in the following anecdote. Two teachers came to me independent of one another after the first staff meeting and clearly announced "not only do I not want to see you in my classroom, I don't even want to see you in my end of the building! Take these kids who can't learn and get them out of here!" In April 1990, again independent of each other, these same two teachers came to my resource room and asked the question, "Why don't you ever come to my classroom?" The word was out. The teachers were very interested in some of the ideas being shared in the co-teaching partnerships.

Many questions emerged from the Clive School staff as we ventured forward with the idea of implementing co-teaching partnerships from an inclusion point of view. Teachers were asking questions like "how can we teach students who arrive in our classrooms with such a diversity of needs; those with identified special needs, those with unidentified unique learning needs **and** maintain the learning environment for those students who are already succeeding?" In my judgment, this question is best answered by teachers who first see themselves as professionals. A professional educator would see the need for identifying and developing new teaching skills and pursue a course of PD that ensured two critical issues were being addressed simultaneously: first, their professional knowledge was being upgraded to meet the challenges of teaching to the needs of their students and secondly, the education of all their students was being addressed. This was the path Dennis and I offered to the staff at Clive School. They liked it, they selected it and it worked.

Dennis and I believe all students can learn. We also believe all educators can learn. Most of our colleagues at Clive School heartily agreed. The challenge, not the problem, is how to teach the diversities of students that cross the school's threshold everyday. In truth, the 280 students enrolled in Clive School represent 280 different ways of learning. Models of teaching that are well researched offer teachers menus of how to teach. Curriculum standards for language, math, science, and social studies guide the teacher's efforts in what to teach. The Clive School staff was interested in a teaching strategy that would facilitate as many learners as possible. What to do?

In March 1990, Dennis and I co-authored an Alberta Teacher's Association grant for $1200.00. In June 1990, a grant of $700.00 was awarded to Clive School. The purpose of this two year grant was to:

1. provide Cooperative Learning training, technical assistance and consulting resources to the Clive School staff.

2. identify key tools, strategies and ideas that worked at Clive School which

empowered staff to be "teacher driven as they implemented a new teaching strategy."

3. create a videotape explaining The Clive School Project. (Title: Integrating Students with Special Needs: A Team Approach).

As I participated in the co-teaching partnerships, I often used the CL teaching strategy developed and researched by Drs. Roger and David Johnson at the University of Minnesota. I received my formal CL training from the the Johnson brothers during my staff development assignment in California. I offered to share what I had learned to the Clive School staff and encouraged them to consider the possibilities CL offered all students! Let me say at this point, CL is a great teaching strategy **and** it isn't the panacea for all teaching situations. The Johnson's would agree. What Clive staff said they liked best about CL was the fact it simultaneously addressed the academic and social skills for all learners. The model lessons I used in the co-teaching partnerships were getting the message out. We were off and running.

As the assistant principal, Dennis was responsible for Clive School's professional development (PD) program. Teachers approached Dennis and asked if the staff could receive a half-day CL inservice. I presented a basic CL overview in the spring of 1990. At the conclusion of this half-day, Dennis approached the staff and requested what additional CL activities they desired. They responded with "more CL training." I met with Dennis and discussed the next CL level which would involve a five day "brown book" basic training. The outcome of this PD investment would result in teachers understanding the distinctions between competitive, individualistic, and cooperative goal structures as well as a knowledge level understanding of the five basic elements of social learning. If indeed the teachers wanted to develop their CL teaching skills, it would require a commitment on their part to a long term effort which would include the basic information on CL as well as research from the change theory literature regarding peer coaching and co-teaching. Training teachers in CL without attending to its implementation would result in a disaster. I recommended to Dennis that if Clive School wanted to seriously develop their CL skills, a PD program designed with the best practices of staff development as the centerpiece was crucial. He agreed.

Dennis presented a recommendation to the Clive staff for a two year CL professional development program. At the conclusion of his recommendation, he stated, "this is the only PD activity we will be doing for the next two years. Do you still want to do this?" The response by all staff members was a resounding "yes!" Dennis' leadership in the form of taking a stand to do PD right, set the course for success at Clive School. In Roland Barth's (1990, p.46) work at the Harvard University Principal's Center, he describes this leadership behavior displayed by Dennis this way: "The most crucial role of a (school administrator) is as head learner, engaging in the most important enterprise of the schoolhouse-experiencing, displaying, modeling, and celebrating what it is hoped and expected that teachers and pupils will do." Clive School was poised for an adventure that would enhance the learning of all its members in this tiny, rural, progressive thinking Canadian village.

The Clive School Story: Applications of Best Practices in Staff Development

Our purpose in implementing the best practices of staff development to influence the professional knowledge of the Scruffy behaviors of Clive School staff was to empower the staff to become more responsible. The use of the descriptor "responsible" is not to suggest that any of the staff at Clive School was being irresponsible in their teaching duties. This is far from the truth of this dedicated body of professional educators. Being responsible in the context of this PD activity was defined to mean fortifying the ability to respond to the individual needs of all learners at Clive School. To accomplish this, the staff agreed to enrich and expand their professional knowledge.

At the outset of the implementation planning, many factors influenced the decision to "do this right." The following items were identified, discussed, selected, and applied throughout the initial and continuing planning of the project. Johnson and Johnson's (1989) practical applications of Cooperative Learning served two primary purposes: first as an appropriate teaching strategy to meet the learning needs of all Clive's students and secondly, it created a school climate which fostered the principles of a learning community. In Berman and McLaughlin (1976) and Loucks (1983), the research on staff development suggested that a PD program must be seen as a long term investment. It is conceivable that it may take as long as 3-5 years to fully develop the program's expected outcome. Krupp's (1978) thoughts on adult learning were significant to our PD project and indeed led us to the work of Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall (1987). In this research, attention was given to the change process and how it affects adult learners. Adult learners experience learning from a concerns-based developmental point of view. Developmentally, educators first learn new things from a personal issues perspective, then move to concerns regarding their students, and finally wonder how they can apply these exciting new ideas to a variety of settings. Practice time, discussion, reflection and refinements regarding the potential of the new ideas are essential elements for professional educators as they master any new teaching strategy. Simply attending a 2 hour workshop after a long day of teaching will not support the construction of new teaching skills. The literature regarding change theory and adult learning has historically screamed and continues to scream "If you want teachers to master their craft, an investment of time and resources, not 2 hour after school workshops, is absolutely critical to serve our primary responsibility, our students."

Each of the research contributions above provided the basic building blocks for the formation of Clive School's template for change. To insure its intended success, specific attention was given to the work of Joyce and Showers (1986). Peer coaching, or that professional responsibility to actively support a colleague in the process of learning something new, was essential to the development of Clive's PD course of action. Without the inclusion and application of the principles of peer coaching, the CL training program would never have taken root at our school. Teachers talking to teachers about the art and craft of their teaching is the most powerful tool that influences a school's climate and culture for meeting the needs of their students.

The following plan illustrates Clive School's long term PD commitment and investment in its staff and students.

Phase 1: Introduction and Training - Fall '90 & Summer '90.

* Clive Staff received a half day CL inservice; decided to focus on CL as a primary PD project. Staff members were invited to participate at a time when they were ready.

* 6 members of the Clive Staff volunteered to participate in a four day CL Summer Institute along with 50 other teachers from throughout Alberta. The outcome of this training was a team action plan describing how CL would be implemented based on the best practices of staff development.

Phase 2: Skill Practice with Coaching - Fall '90 and Spring '91.

* Teachers "tried out" CL in classes of their choice. Videotaping of beginning CL experiences was utilized to assist the coaching pairs who had selected to participate in the Clive School PD program.

* Peer coaches supported each other by helping with the planning of CL lessons, observing their coaching partners teaching the lessons, and providing feedback to each other. At this time, the role of the "in-classroom consulting resource teacher" was highlighted and made available to all teachers requesting assistance in the general education classroom.

Phase 3: Skill Application with more Coaching - Fall '91.

* Teachers and coaches targeted CL as a major teaching strategy for a particular subject area of their choice. Videotaping of CL lessons continued for the sole purpose of increasing the professional knowledge of the teachers.

Phase 4: Demonstration Program - Spring '92.

* Teachers determined when they felt ready to open their respective classrooms to other teachers in the County of Lacombe and the Province of Alberta.

* Teachers elected to become a CL demonstration program for the Province of Alberta. 3-5 "demo days" are scheduled each year for two purposes: first, to invite other educators into the school and secondly, to visit each other's classroom.

The Clive School Story: Successes and Even More New Directions

The development of the Phase 4 Demonstration Program was not part of Clive School's original PD script. It simply emerged. It was the right thing to do for a variety of reasons. In our profession, Dennis and I believe we as educators have a responsibility to all members of our craft no matter where it's practiced. Much like Wheatley's (1994) ideas regarding the concept of fields, we too believe all things are inextricably linked. Wheatley suggests that the concept of space should be replaced with that of fields. In her thinking, space suggests a distance between two points expressed in time and motion. She challenges the notion of distance. Everything is connected. Fields of energy flow across and throughout the universe. What happens in a preschool program in San Antonio, Texas is ultimately linked with the high school science program in Fargo, North Dakota. Applying the idea of fields works well for our Clive School program. We know that what happens in Brian McClelland's grade three language learning class has an effect on Garry Trarback's grade nine social studies class. When Holly Baines and Karen Klassen teach the social skill of listening to their respective grade one and two students, it has an effect on Jackie Taylor's grade five science program, Theresa Stephens unit on Pioneer Days and Rob McKinnon's outdoor education class. Realizing this, the need for updating and adding new fields of professional knowledge supported by the best practices of staff development, will continue to inspire the staff and others to tell the Clive School Story.

The following are just a few of the many Clive School stories we hope will encourage you and your school to take the risk and design a PD program based on the principles of effective staff development.

* Peter Senge's (1990) ideas regarding learning organizations, particularly the concept of personal mastery, and Covey's (1989) notion of "seeking first to understand before being understood", continues to serve as catalysts for conversations among our colleagues at Clive School. Often, teachers will disagree with the what and how of an idea. Disagreements are a good thing when they are accompanied by a rich conversation driven by different perspectives. This is fertile soil. Vella (1994) reinforces the significance of conversation as she defines the concept of dialogue. Dialogue best supports adult learning. "Dia" means between and "logus" means word. Hence, dialogue means the word(s) between us. This is one of the basic reinforcements for creating a CL demonstration program. When teachers visit our school, it affords the opportunity for Clive School staff to talk about what they have and are continuing to learn. In this dialoguing, there is a reciprocal learning opportunity for both the visiting teacher and the demonstration teacher. Teachers from Calgary, Edmonton, Ponoka, Camrose, Red Deer, and Morinville have visited Clive School.

* During the 1992-93 school year, I took a leave of absence from Clive School and taught in the Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Department at San Jose State University in San Jose, CA. While teaching, I had the opportunity to share with new resource specialist teachers how they can facilitate change as it relates to the inclusion of students with special needs. The focal point for this course of study was

The Clive School Story. As a culminating activity for the 17 resource teachers enrolled in this class, we participated in a live on-line video conference with teachers from Clive School. The purpose of the video conference was to discuss how resource teachers can utilize CL and the best practices of staff development to facilitate the inclusion of students with special needs in the general education classroom. The hour long dialogue between new resource teachers in San Jose, CA. and classroom teachers from Clive, Alberta was exciting, productive, practical and reciprocal for all parties.

* Presentations regarding The Clive School Story have been made at the Calgary Teacher's Convention, The Greater Edmonton Teacher's Convention, The Alberta Special Education Conference and the Nevada State Special Education Collaboration Conference. Dennis and Jackie Taylor, the Clive School grade five teacher, have presented at some of these and other conferences. As a result of our commitment to employing the best practices of staff development, our staff continues to grow professionally. The efficacy of this investment has made a difference in how teachers perceive the learning of their students. In Armstrong's book (1987), he challenges the definition of students who are learning disabled. His new idea centers on the notion that students aren't learning disabled so much as they learn differently. This perspective creates an opening for expanding the value of PD programs. The staff at Clive School lean heavily upon their professional knowledge and co-teaching partnerships in order to meet the needs of their students. Currently, Clive School is in the midst of another professional development innovation. The Collaborative Action Research Project in Reading, is a school wide reading program. Because of our school's history in institutionalizing the best practices of staff development, new ideas are more smoothly infused into Clive School's climate and culture. Dennis' remark captures the essence of this new reading program as it fits into Clive School's thriving learning community: "You should see the school during paired reading; cross-graded pairs of students are all over the place!" Implementing PD best practices works!

Throughout this adventure, we were constantly encouraged by two ideas. The first idea is captured in our school's PD motto: GO SLOW TO GO FAST. We took advantage of the research on best practices in staff development. We knew it would take us 3 - 5 years to make this work. By giving ourselves permission to take the time to insure a successful experience, we have made a difference for our students and ourselves. Secondly, a quote by Margaret Mead originally influenced our thinking and continues to do so. We encourage you to follow Margaret's lead.

> "As we work together to achieve the vision, remember... never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever does."

If you are interested in knowing more about Clive School's CL Demonstration Program, please feel free to contact Dennis in Clive, Alberta at (403) 784-3354.

Go slow to go fast, work together and have fun. You will be amazed with the results.

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Michael E. Sullivan, Ed.D.
Associate Professor
Special Education & Leadership Studies
100 Angus E. Peyton Drive
So. Charleston, WV 25309

STEMMING TEACHER TURNOVER IN RURAL SETTINGS: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Historically, teacher shortages in critical certification areas such as special education have generated extensive dialogue between public education (K-12) and teacher education programs. West Virginia, a very rural and sparsely populated state has been no stranger to these discussions. A review of the West Virginia Department of Education's annual reports, Supply/Demand of Educational Personnel, for the last nine years revealed that nearly one of every three educators assigned to special education settings serve don some type of sub-standard license. Further, the percentage of personnel on emergency licenses did not decline significantly in spite of the efforts of both public and higher education.

Investigations into the nature of chronic special education teachers shortages revealed a number of interesting factors contributing to this problem. One fact which became immediately apparent was that there was actually no shortage of fully certified personnel in some areas of exceptionality. For example, in 1995-96, there were 2311 fully certified mental retardation professionals teaching in West Virginia (West Virginia Department of Education, 1996). During the same year, there were 1137 employees, 19.1 percent were serving on sub-standard licenses. The same pattern existed for other areas of assignment for a number of years. The illusion of "shortage" was created by state code and regulation which allow certified general educators to use emergency licensure as an entry-level route to secure employment, obtain full licensure in special education while at the same time accruing seniority within their school district. Then, when a general education position opens, the recently licensed special educator may use their senior status to "bid out", leaving yet another assignment to be filled on an emergency-licensure basis. Recognition of this problem served as a primary force in the development of an alternative certification track for students whose formal training was in a field other than education. Prior to describing this program, it is important to set the context within which the development of the alternative program occurred.

Overview-Alternative Teacher Certification

Koff, Floris and Crouin (1976) described traditional teacher certification as a process developed to assure that those who enter the teaching profession meet some set of minimum competency standards. Each state has the latitude to set these standards and a document developed by the National Association of Directors of Teacher Education and Certification annually describes these requirements. Typically, traditional certification programs included specific credit hour requirements to be earned from higher education institutions in the content (subject) area, professional studies (e.g. methodology) and in practica (student or practice teaching). Colleges and universities typically verify that the candidate has met minimum credit hour standards at which time many state education agencies also require successful completion of competency tests prior to the issuance of the certificate.

Alternative teacher certification, within the context of this paper, may be described as a departure from the more traditional undergraduate route through teacher education programs. In addition, the program to be described differed from traditional certification by establishing a different target population and length of training rather than in program content, vigor or expected outcome.s This was consistent with the position advocated by Smith et al. (1985). Further, the features of alternative programs recommended by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education were adopted and included rigorous admissions standards, curriculum appropriate to the beginning teacher, a supervised internship and competency examinations in both the subject field and professional studies.

The alternative program described in this paper is one of a series of programs offered among the states for the purpose of attracting quality adults who already have at least a bachelor's degree into the teaching profession. As of September 1995, nineteen states had alternative certification programs that were recognized in the most recent National Center for Education Information report (1995) on alternative teacher certification.

Program Description

The goal of the alternative special education program is to provide educational opportunities for students at the post-bachelor's and master's degree level to become teachers of exceptional children in one of three categories: mental retardation, specific learning disabilities, or behavior disorders. Individuals seeking certification in the areas of mental retardation, learning disabilities, and behavior disorders may come into the program from non-education fields.

Program experiences in special education involve examining traditional and contemporary practices, using the terminology of the field, and identifying the characteristics of each group of exceptional children relative to historical, environmental, educational, cultural, legal and political conditions. The utilization of standardized and criterion referenced diagnostic tests in the cognitive and affective areas is also a part of program experiences.

Developing cognitive and affective diagnostic hypotheses for each child and generating and translating those data into educational programming are stressed in the program. Selecting and developing materials, determining appropriate approaches to instruction, and developing and using behavioral objectives are of principal importance. Additionally, planning and developing a total teaching environment that promotes effective learning through flexible scheduling in a variety of administrative arrangements are required experiences in the alternative special education program.

GENERAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students seeking admission to the Special education Program must submit the following:

1. Official transcripts from all colleges or universities (an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or above is preferred);
2. Three recommendations on forms available in the Office of Admission and Records;
3. Detailed personal statement of life and work experiences and career goals and aspirations regarding special education; and
4. Score on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Aptitude Test. A score of 900 or above is preferred. This requirement is waived for applications holding a graduate degree.

Additional Admission Requirements for Non-Education Majors Seeking MR, SLD, or BD certification must:

In addition to the general admission requirements stated above, non-education majors seeking K-12 MR, SLD, or BD certification must:

1. Take and pass the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST) before enrolling in any special education certification coursework. The PPSt is waived upon documentation from a single test administration of the American College Testing Program (ACT) composite

score of 25 or above, an enhanced ACT score of 26 or above, or a scholastic Achievement Test score of 1035. The PPST is waived for individuals with a graduate degree.

2. Complete the following prerequisite courses with a GPA of 3.25 before beginning special education certification coursework:

Ed. 500	-	Survey: Introduction, History and Philosophy of Education	3 hrs.
Ed. 516	-	Human Development	3 hrs.
Rdng. 525	-	Psychological Foundations of Reading	3 hrs.
Sp. Ed. 507	-	Introduction to Consultative Collaboration	1 hr.
Sp. Ed. 508	-	Mentorship and Effective Teaching	1 hr.
Sp. Ed. 509	-	Transition: Planning and Implementation	1 hr.

3. Take and pass the state Multi-Subjects Content Specialization test (K-8) during the first six hours of certification coursework in Special Education.

Multiple criteria are used in arriving at a decision to admit students to the special education program. Each applicant is evaluated with reference to the following criteria: GRE scores, letters of recommendation, quality of content and written expression in the personal statement, undergraduate grade point average, and performance on graduate courses completed. Flexibility is maintained in the application of the criteria to individual cases through the use of a weighting scale.

If the applicant's weighted score falls below the acceptable minimum for admission as a degree or professional development student, the student may be eligible for provisional enrollment. A student who is on provisional status must take nine (9) hours of specified coursework with a GPA of 3.25 and then reapply for admission as a professional development student. Further, a student admitted as a professional development student may reapply for admission as a degree student if he/she completes all certification requirements with an overall GPA of 3.25.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Each degree program includes all certification work for one of the specializations. Degree students follow a planned program of study and must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0. Degree students are required to plan and implement an original research study in their area of specialization. Students must also pass a written comprehensive examination.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES
MASTER'S DEGREE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

A master's degree may be earned with a specialization in one of three areas: Behavior Disorders, Mental Retardation or Specific Learning Disabilities. Students are responsible for checking all course descriptions for prerequisites.

Program Requirements for BD, MR, and SLD

Core Courses Required in BD, MR and SLD* 12 hrs.

Sp. Ed. 500	Introduction to Special Education
Sp. Ed. 550	Assessment in Special Education
Sp. Ed. 553	General Program Planning for Exceptional Children
Ed. 501	Seminar: Educational Research

Certification Area Specific Courses* 9 hrs.

Learning Disabilities

Sp. Ed. 504	Characteristics and Etiology - LD
Sp. Ed. 561	Program Planning/Implementation - LD
Sp. Ed. 610	Field Experience - LD

Behavior Disorders

Sp. Ed. 503	Characteristics and Etiology - BD
Sp. Ed. 556	Program Planning/Implementation - BD
Sp. Ed. 611	Field Experience - BD

Mental Retardation

Sp. Ed. 501	Characteristics and Etiology - MR
Sp. Ed. 559	Program Planning and Implementation - MR
Sp. Ed. 609	Field Experience - MR

Required Degree Courses 18 hrs.

Sp. Ed. 601	Sp. Ed. Research, Part I (3 hours)
Sp. Ed. 602	Sp. Ed. Research, Part II (3 hours)

Approved Electives (12 hours)

Total Hours for Degree 39 hrs.

*Students must complete 12 hours of core courses and 9 hours of certification area specialization course to obtain initial certification in each area. Additional endorsements may be added with the completion of the 7 - 9 hours of certification areas specific courses.

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

All Special Education majors must take the Content Specialization test in the area(s) in which they seek endorsement, i.e., BD, SLD., and MR. The Special Education Content Specialization Test is taken at the end of the certification coursework in Special Education.

Students

This alternative program was initiated in the 1986-87 academic year. Since that time, 116 students from non-traditional backgrounds have sought admission to the program. The average student was 34.6 years of age, had two children and was otherwise fully employed. Only five students attended classes on a full-time basis. Additionally, these students were drawn from 33 of the state's 55 counties.

Course delivery

Delivery of coursework is always a challenge for an institution which has a "campus bound", a variety of techniques have been utilized to service rural students. Traditionally, the institution has relied heavily on a cadre of carefully selected adjunct faculty who join full-time faculty in traveling to one of the seven "distant" sites. In addition, both audio-only and video-teleconferencing (with audio bridge) are utilized to link distant sites with professors. To date, identification of cohort groups formed to participate in the preliminary block of coursework has been only partially implemented due to the geographic dispersion of these non-traditional students. Finally, a variety of alternative class meeting schedules have been developed to fit the nature of some coursework or a particular group of students.

Results

Students who participate in this alternative program typically have three competency tests to master in addition to coursework and prior to receiving a recommendation for certification. The special education program has utilized competency tests developed by the State Department of Education via contract with National Evaluation Systems for this purpose. The first is the Preprofessional Skills Test (PPST) which measures basic skills in the areas of mathematics, reading and writing. This test is waived for applicants with acceptable performance levels on either the ACT (25) or an SAT score of 1035 or for those holding a graduate degree. Results thus far are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF EXAMINEES AND PASS RATES
FOR PPST BY INSTITUTION AND STATE

	Institution (alternative program)	State
Number of Examinees	41	9346
Examinee Pass Rate (%)	90.2	92.3

The second competency test was the Multi-Subject Test (Grades K-8). This test was typically required by students exiting four year early/middle childhood (K-8) teacher preparation programs. An underlying assumption of all K-12 special education certification programs described earlier is that the non-traditional student will be able to demonstrate those skills by successfully completing this test. Results to date are summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF EXAMINEES AND PASS RATES FOR MST (K-8) BY INSTITUTION AND STATE

	Institution (alternative program)	State
Number of Examinees	78	3114
Percent Passing	87.2	92.1

Having successfully mastered the first two competency test requirements, the student is eligible to complete the remaining certification coursework, the clinically supervised practicum and the final exceptionality-specific (SLD, BD or MR) competency test required for certification. Results to date are summarized in Table 3.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF EXAMINEES AND PASS RATES FOR SP. ED. COMPETENCY TESTS BY INSTITUTION AND STATE

	Institution (alternative program)	State
Number of Examinees	66	1248
Pass Rate (%)	98.5	96.4

The basic premise for the development of the alternative program was that attracting quality adults from non-education backgrounds might have a stabilizing effect on retention rates of special educators in rural settings. The following summary table describes the results of a follow-up study which tracked the retention rates for students completing the program.

TABLE 4

RETENTION RATES FOR ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM (SUMMARY)

Total Number Licensed	62	
Number initially employed in-state	55	(88.7%)
Number currently employed in-state	49	(79.0%)
Number employed in system originally hiring	43	(69.4%)

Discussion

Of a total of 116 students from non-traditional backgrounds who have sought special education licensure through this alternative route, 62 have completed all certification requirements. It is important to note the effect of the succession of competency testing requirements upon the terminal licensure testing success ratios for the alternative program. On the surface, it appears that these screens have successfully filtered the applicants for desirable qualities and potential as is evident in the high success rate for those at the final competency determination level of testing. One limitation of the study (and one that bears further investigation) is the fact that the competency testing utilized specify minimum competency levels rather than more advanced performance standards.

"States report that more than 20,000 people have been licensed through alternative certification programs since 1985" (National Center for Education Information, 1993). It is the belief of this writer that those students who have completed this alternative certification track meet the most important performance criterion of being "safe to practice", a standard proposed by Williamson et al. in 1985. Because the turnover rate for these special educators was significantly diminished, one more puzzle piece may be added in the effort to serve special needs students in rural settings.

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Charles Belcher
New Mexico State University/Las Cruces Public Schools
Las Cruces, New Mexico

A UNIFIED EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: PRESERVICE PREPARATION OF TEACHERS TO MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS

The dual systems of general education and special education have coexisted since the ratification of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 at both the preservice and school levels. At the preservice level, future educators from general and special education are trained with little or no interaction between groups of students and respective faculties of general and special education. At the school level, services for students with disabilities have typically been given in segregated classrooms or schools removed from the general education classroom.

Students with disabilities are entitled to the least restrictive environment (LRE). Every state agency must insure that each public agency (school district) establishes and implements procedures that provide for the least restrictive environment for each student. Least restrictive environment is the education of students with disabilities, including students in public or private institutions, with students without disabilities to the greatest extent possible. The second requirement of LRE states that special classes, separate schooling or other removal of students with disabilities from the general education environment, occurs only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in the general education classroom cannot be achieved satisfactorily [34 CFR §300.550; 20 USC § 1412 (5)(B)]. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EHA or P.L. 94-142) is the federal law passed in 1975 which regulates special education It also defined special education and the exceptionalities recognized by the federal government. P.L. 94-142 was reauthorized in 1990 and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). At that time, the provision of equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities was identified as a protected civil right (Mayhew, 1994; Powers, 1992; Smith, Polloway, Patton, & Dowdy, 1995).

For over 30 years, schools have been practicing mainstreaming, or the practice of placing students with disabilities in general education classrooms as opposed to special segregated classrooms or settings, in the public schools. More recently, the term inclusion has been used in education. Mainstreaming differs from inclusion in that mainstreaming does not necessarily include a trained special education teacher in the room while the provisions of LRE can include services in a general education environment. Recently, LRE has been used as the justification for inclusion. Inclusion was defined in Sacramento City Unified School District v Rachel Holland as "the child with a disability is a full member of a regular education class with no additional assignment to any special class...however, the child need not be in the classroom 100% of the time" (As cited in Evans, 1996, p 2).

Mainstreaming has not been practiced consistently in all parts of the country. The requirement of least restrictive environment has resulted in an increase in the number of students with disabilities whose education is provided in the general education classroom for some or all of the educational day. However, the dual systems of general and special education still continue. Many individuals and organizations have called for the reevaluation of special education to address this dual educational system history (Mayhew, 1994; Smith, Polloway, Patton, & Dowdy, 1995; Will, 1986).

Madeline Will, the former Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, called for the "shared responsibility" for the education of students with disabilities by general and special education. Secretary Will believed their should be an educational partnership between general and special education, as opposed to a consolidation of the two fields. Will's shared responsibility soon became known as the Regular Education Initiative (REI). Will stated that the dual systems should "cooperatively assess the educational needs of students with learning problems and...cooperatively develop effective educational strategies for meeting those needs (Will, 1986, 415).

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) reviewed research and articles related to teacher perceptions of inclusion and mainstreaming for the period of 1958 through 1995. The databases searched included the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) (1966-1995), Psychological Abstracts (1988-1995), Current Index to Journals in Education (1985-1995, and Exceptional Child Education Resources (1985-1995). The reference lists from books determined by the researchers to be relevant to topic, literature reviews, and all identified relevant reports were also searched for additional references. In addition, the major special education journals were hand searched for reports that provided original data on teacher attitudes toward including students with disabilities in their general education classrooms. For the study, articles or reports in the special education journal had to include data on the percent that agreed to specific items related to teacher attitudes or how such data could be reasonably estimated. Overall, Scruggs and Mastropieri found that most teachers (65.0%) indicated support for the concept of inclusion. A slightly lower percentage (53.4%) expressed a willingness to teach students with disabilities. When asked if students benefit from inclusion, most teachers (54.4%) agreed that students with or without disabilities could benefit from the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom. This is in contrast with a minority of teachers (30.3%) who believed that students with disabilities could be disruptive to the general education classroom. Also, few teachers (27.7%) believed they had sufficient time to undertake inclusion with one study indicating a majority of teachers (87.2%) expressing that they would prefer 1 hour of daily planning time for mainstreaming students with disabilities. Concomitantly, few respondents (29.2%) believed that teachers had sufficient expertise or training for mainstreaming.

Belcher (1995) surveyed the attitudes of professionals in attendance at a presentation on inclusive education at New Mexico's Council for Exceptional Children in Albuquerque. The results indicated that while the majority supported inclusive educational settings, a small percentage (7-15%) were consistently nonsupportive on all items. There was considerable disagreement on the nine items related to; a) least restrictive environment, b) labeling diminishing student self worth, c) inclusion of students with learning disabilities who have spatial and time orientation problems outside of a resource room, d) preservation of financial resources for students with mild disabilities if they are placed in general education classrooms, e) effectiveness of additional training and consultative support for general education staff to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the classroom without a resource room, f) the inappropriate use of the label learning disabled, g) identification of students with disabilities as a discriminatory practice, and h) receptiveness of general education teachers for consultative visits by special education staff.

Taylor, Richards, Goldstein, and Schilit (1997) surveyed the perceptions of graduate and undergraduate special and general education students regarding their opinions of the Regular Education Initiative (R.E.I.). The general and special educators agreed in principal with the philosophy of the R.E.I.. The group also agreed that changes needed to be made in the curriculum and instructional methodologies used in the classroom to meet the needs of students with disabilities. This is in direct opposition to the principle of the R.E.I. which states that students with disabilities can be effectively educated in the general education classroom using the same curriculum and instructional methodologies. The general educators believed that students with intellectual impairments or behavioral or emotional disabilities should not be placed in the general education classroom. However, the special educators believed that these students should be placed in the general education classroom with both special education and general education teachers present in the room.

Stainback and Stainback (1989) proposed action at the college or university level for the merger of personnel preparation programs currently segregated in regular and special education. First, the faculty of the special education and regular education departments must analyze the curricula and emerging demands on educators. The emerging demands would include such items as proficiency in the use of technology and collaborative teaming. Following the analysis, the faculty cadre must determine the core values, knowledge, and skills all teachers need to acquire. Second, through this process, the faculty will likely discover needs in the current curriculum and the need for new courses. Finally, the faculty cadre must determine the courses to add to the program to address the needs identified in the analysis of emerging demands and the identified core values, knowledge, and skills all teachers need.

Stainback and Stainback (1989) recommended a course core set of courses as the basis for all education majors. Each student would complete courses in: a) historical and philosophical foundations of education; b) child and adolescent development; c) human relationships and sensitivity to human difference; d) classroom organization, management, and motivational strategies; e) curriculum design and adaptations; f) educational measurement and authentic assessment; g) peer-mediated strategies (cooperative group learning, peer tutoring, students as peacemakers and mediators of conflict); h) adapting instruction to individual differences; i) use of audiovisual/media/computers/ technology; j) home, school, and community relations; k) issues and trends in education; and l) creativity and collaborative teaming. Each student would also be required to select an area of specialization, such as Reading, Language Arts, Math, etc. The questionnaire will compare the institutions course requirements to the suggested list and determine the areas of agreement and deficiency.

The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) is an association of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) comprised of individuals who are administrators of special education programs. CASE's Executive Committee authorized the process which lead to the creation of a drafted statement regarding the future agenda of special education. This process began in October 1991 with the Executive Committee. The original intent of the statement was to determine an agenda for the future of special education. The focus soon changed to the merging of the dual educational systems currently in use of special and regular education.

McLaughlin of the University Maryland Policy Center and Warren of the National Academy on the Principalship in Special Education at Indiana University (as cited in Council of Administrators of Special Education, 1993) determined ten issues related to the future of special education and successful inclusion of students with disabilities in educational settings. The issues identified are: a) stakeholder responsibility in a community, b) develop a clear vision and mission for education that includes all students, c) establish a system of accountability for all educational programs, d) personnel preparation and certification, e) funding, f) create an organization that supports the mission of restructuring, g) change what schools teach and how they teach it, h) creation of supports for staff development and staff renewal, i) integrated community services for students with disabilities and families, and j) educational technology. Based on and in conjunction with the work of McLaughlin and Warren, the CASE Research Committee produced a draft statement.

The statement developed by the Executive Committee of CASE consisted of a list of five policy and five action recommendations related to the ten issues identified by McLaughlin and Warren. The Executive Committee of CASE's statement advocated the creation of a unified educational system "to ensure quality, inclusive education for all students" and that "all educators are prepared to educate all students" (1993, p 2).

The issues as identified by McLaughlin and Warren in conjunction with work from the National Academy on the Principalship in Special Education at Indiana University with the policy and action recommendations formulated by the CASE Executive Committee gives a clearer direction for schools to implement unified educational systems. The fourth issue and policy recommendation, personnel preparation and certification to educate all students, was the primary focus of this research project with policy and action recommendations 1, 3, 8, and 10 being related to the research topic of preservice preparation of teachers to meet the educational needs of all students.

Villa, Thousand, and Chapple (1996) identified four institutions of higher education that have responded to Stainback and Stainback (1989) and created new and innovative training programs. The institution's programs model community and faculty collaboration and have departed from the traditional methods of teacher preparation. The resulting action is the merging of the expertise and knowledge of formerly segregated higher education and school-based education. The institutions include: a) Trinity College, Burlington, Vermont; b) Syracuse University, New York; c) the University of California at San Marco; and d) Arizona State University - West, Phoenix. The work of Villa, Thousand, and Chapple and their identification of these four institutions of higher education will be continued in the study of four year colleges and universities to identify those that offer teacher preparation for unified heterogeneous schools.

Villa, Thousand, and Chapple (1996) discuss the current division of teacher preparation programs into separate, distinct, and categorical programs of general education and special education. Special education is then further divided into the various subcategories of learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, severe disabilities, English as a second language, gifted and talented, and other divisions based on a specific disability. This division and subdivision causes educators-in-preparation to neither have the knowledge nor the expectation to create heterogeneous learning experiences for students of differing abilities. The graduates of teacher preparation programs are prepared to teach one group. Villa, Thousand, and Chapple pose the question, "Is it any wonder that general and special education evolved as separate systems? (p 43)"

The situation is further complicated by the low number of teacher preparation programs that model the act of adults collaborating across areas of expertise. Villa, Thousand, and Chapple point out that the act of collaboration is the most important skill teachers need to survive in a profession where no one could possibly meet the needs of all the children assigned to them (Mayhew, 1994; Salisbury, Evans, & Palombaro, 1997; Villa, Thousand, & Chapple, 1996). Sarason, Levine, Goldenberg, Cherlin, and Bennett (as cited in Villa, Thousand, & Chapple, 1996) described teaching as the "lonely profession." Villa, Thousand, and Chapple state that it can no longer be a lonely profession.

With the separated systems of teacher preparation of general and special education, graduates are not adequately prepared. Trainees are not provided with the intensive training and experience to develop the necessary skills to be effective collaborators in planning, teaching, and evaluating instruction. To mediate the situation, Villa, Thousand, and Chapple suggest that programs preparing general and special education teachers should place the emphasis on theory, practice, and experience in collaborative planning, teaching, and problem-solving techniques. The priority should be given to developing and implementing non-categorical programs that merge training programs so that general, special, and related service personnel (speech language pathologists, physical therapists, psychologists, etc.) share common course work and practicum experiences. Inservice for local school personnel, community members, and students must focus on acquiring and practicing collaborative planning, teaching, and evaluation skills with the goal of effective education for all children.

Villa, Thousand, Meyers, and Nevin (1996) identified 8 assumptions of heterogeneous schooling. First, in the framework of a zero reject educational placement, all children belong in general education classrooms in their neighborhood schools. The second assumption is that the needs of all students can be met in general education with technical assistance, team teaching, administrative support, and collaboration with all shareholders (parents, students, related service personnel, educators, and community members). Third, in heterogeneous schooling, general and special educators are coequal partners, and share responsibility for the education of all children in their schools. Fourth, both general and special educators acquire new skills through collaboration, training, and experience with children who present challenges. Fifth, all shareholders benefit from heterogeneous educational practices. Sixth, schools must be restructured to facilitate role redefinition and to make it acceptable for students to have individual academic and social needs. Seventh, within schools, the body of decision makers must be expanded to include teachers, students, and community members. Eighth and finally, due to successful experiences, attitudes change over time.

With the possibility of a move to a unified educational system, as defined by the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) in association with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the need for teachers prepared to meet the educational needs of regular and special education students is increased. To be prepared to meet the education needs of regular and special education students, teachers need to be adequately trained in the areas related to special education.

The "Common Core of Knowledge and Skills Essential for all Beginning Special Education Teachers" (Council for Exceptional Children, 1995, 12) consists of eight statements and accompanying areas of knowledge and skills. The eight statements of common core knowledge and skills to be represented in course work are: a) philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education; b) characteristics of learners; c) assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation; d) instructional content and practice; e) planning and managing the teaching and learning environment; f) managing student behavior and social interaction skills; g) communication and collaborative partnerships; and h) professional and ethical practices. The eight common core of knowledge and skills will be included on the questionnaire in the initial section for preservice programs for unified heterogeneous educational systems. In addition, the blending of the common core of knowledge and skills with the course work identified by Stainback and Stainback will formulate the 30 course titles for comparison with the requirements and offered course listings of each institution.

The Specialty Areas Studies Board of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) approved the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) guidelines for preparing special education professionals on October 15, 1996. This action will require the 40 states that have partnerships with NCATE to align their state standards for special education professional preparation with CEC's guidelines for preparing special education professionals. Some of the affected states will require colleges and universities to submit their special education preparation programs to CEC for approval to retain state accreditation. In states without a partnership agreement with NCATE, any college or university seeking NCATE accreditation must first submit their special education programs to CEC for approval by demonstrating they meet the standards (Council for Exceptional Children, 1996).

The need for teachers to be prepared for a unified heterogeneous educational system leads to the formation of a research hypothesis. For the study, the research hypothesis is as follows. For the population of colleges and universities in the United States of America in the sample that offer degrees leading to certification in general education and special education, how many offer course work that prepares teachers for a unified heterogeneous educational system?

A random survey of teacher preservice programs throughout the United States was conducted to determine which programs are preparing future teachers for a unified heterogeneous educational system of education (n=49). The institutions selected were from the colleges and universities listed in either Lovejoys College Guide (Straughn & Straughn, 1995), The College Blue Book (Author, 1993) or Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges (Author, 1996) and which were listed as offering both regular and special education degrees. The sample (n=49) included institutions in 48 states and the District of Columbia. Two states, Alaska and Hawaii, did not have institutions listed that offered both general and special education majors in the three college guides used. The institutions were surveyed utilizing a document review of published college catalogs for the 1996-1997 academic year. The course titles included on the instrument were derived from the 12 core courses from Stainback and Stainback (1989) and the common core of knowledge and skills identified by CEC (1995).

The questions on the document review included an indication of which courses listed, as defined by Stainback and Stainback (1989) and the Council for Exceptional Children (1995) are required by the college/university for graduation. The percentages of colleges and universities in the sample which required and/or offered the courses was greatest for those courses in general education. One pair of courses, "Peer-Mediated Strategies (cooperative group learning, peer tutoring, students as peacemakers and mediators of conflict) in General Education" and "Peer-Mediated Strategies in Special Education," had the lowest percentages with 4% of the institutions offered and 0% required the course in general education and 2% offered and required the course in special education. The majority of the institutions that required a course specifically related to special education populations required the course of special education majors but not those in general education. Some of the colleges and universities in the sample listed one required course for graduation that addressed both areas of general and special education populations. Other institutions required one course for general education and another course for special education majors exclusively. In response to the research hypothesis, "For the population of colleges and universities in the United States of America in the sample that offer degrees leading to certification in general education and special education, how many offer course work that prepares teachers for a unified heterogeneous educational system?," none of the colleges or universities offered all the courses identified in the questionnaire. The majority of institutions offered more than half of the classes. Therefore, for the majority of the institutions, the addition of courses or the restructuring of existing courses to include issues related to students with disabilities would make these programs reflect the total public school population. The resulting change would yield a teacher preservice preparation program that prepares teachers for a unified heterogeneous education system.

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Jennifer Grisham-Brown, University of Kentucky, Lexington
James A. Knoll, Morehead State University, Morehead, Kentucky
Belva C. Collins, University of Kentucky, Lexington
Constance M. Baird, University of Kentucky, Lexington

MULTI-UNIVERSITY COLLABORATION VIA DISTANCE LEARNING TO TRAIN RURAL SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AND RELATED SERVICES PERSONNEL

(Submitted for publication)

Historically, the retention and recruitment of special education teachers, particularly those certified in low incidence disabilities, has been a problem for rural school districts (Gold, Russell, & Williams, 1993; Helge, 1981). Distance learning technology offers a means by which institutions of higher learning (IHE's) can pool their resources and collaborate to deliver courses that require expertise that might be available statewide (Barker, 1992).

Several IHE's in Kentucky have joined their resources to meet needs unique to personnel preparation programs in low incidence disabilities. In response to the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) (Miller, Nolan, & Schaaf, 1990), IHE's in Kentucky began to examine their teacher education programs and to make changes that ensured that the personnel they trained met new state standard outcomes in the certification area of Moderate/Severe Disabilities (MSD). One of the competencies required of personnel seeking certification in this area was the ability to provide transdisciplinary services for students with low incidence disabilities (Orelove & Sobsey, 1996). The course created to teach this competency relied on the expertise of both special educators and related service delivery personnel. Finding personnel to offer such a course proved to be a dilemma for IHE's across the state. As a result, a multi-university effort was utilized to deliver this course content.

The purpose of this article is to describe the development and content of a multi-university course in transdisciplinary services offered via distance learning technology that resulted from a collaborative effort between MSD program personnel at IHE's in Kentucky. In particular, the article focuses on the collaborative relationship that developed between Morehead State University (MSU), a rural regional university that serves Eastern Appalachian Kentucky, and the University of Kentucky (UK), located in Central Kentucky. The success of this collaborative undertaking has implications for the development and delivery of similar collaborative distance learning courses offered through other IHE's and multi-state or regional programs that prepare personnel to serve rural low incidence populations.

Development

A brief history of the impetus for the development of the multi-university course is in order to fully understand the level of collaboration needed for successful delivery of coursework in this fashion. In 1992, shortly after KERA was enacted, a Higher Education Task Force, comprised of faculty from all of Kentucky's MSD programs, decided there was a need to restructure the certificates for teaching students with moderate and severe disabilities. The current certification program required dual certification in elementary education, resulting in lengthy programs (greater than 160 hours in some cases) for undergraduates and low graduate rates in that area. The Higher Education Task Force decided that a single certificate was needed that (a) did not require elementary certification, (b) encompassed competencies for teaching learners with both moderate and severe disabilities, and (c) required coursework in elementary or secondary education so that students could get an additional certification if desired. The Higher Education Task Force developed competencies that they subsequently submitted to the Kentucky Standards Board and, in 1994, a new teaching certification in MSD was endorsed.

The year following the development of the teaching certificate, the Higher Education Task force revisited the competencies and determined areas where specific personnel preparation programs would have implementation difficulties with the new certificate. Two of the areas they identified were transdisciplinary services and education of learners with the most severe disabilities, including deafblindness. Faculty from rural areas of the state were concerned that they did not have adequate faculty resources to teach courses in these areas. Specifically, in the area of transdisciplinary services, faculty were concerned that there were few specialists (e.g., physical or occupational therapists) in their region of the state who could deliver the course content. As a result of these concerns, the Kentucky Deafblind Project (operated out of the UK) was invited to develop a course on the delivery of transdisciplinary services to students with Deafblindness and Multiple Disabilities. The resulting course, entitled Transdisciplinary Services to Students with Deafblindness and Other Multiple Disabilities, was developed with input from professionals from other disciplines, including speech/language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing, and visually impaired services and piloted at UK in the Spring of 1995.

Following the initial offering in 1995, the Task Force examined the course content and evaluations. At that time, UK invited IHEs with MSD certification programs to participate in the course the following year. Faculty from MSU, Brescha College (a small denominational college in rural Western Kentucky), and the University of Louisville (U of L) (an urban IHE in northern Kentucky) indicated a need for the course content and stated that the course would fit into their existing curricula. In order to offer the transdisciplinary course to multiple sites, the Task Force determined that distance learning technology was the best choice for multi-university course delivery.

Once the participants were identified, they held two planning meetings via compressed video (two-way audio and two-way visual delivery) to negotiate physical, fiscal, and scheduling issues, as well as the roles and responsibilities of all cooperating/coordinating faculty. The group first made the decision to offer the course via compressed video, as opposed to satellite delivery. Their rationale for this decision was that (a) students from rural and urban programs could interact directly with one another, (b) any discipline specialist from another location would not have to travel to UK to delivery a lecture, and (c) some class activities (e.g., discussions) could be accomplished more effectively with this medium. Since the program's primary transmitting site was at UK, both on- and off-campus UK students had access to the course.

Second, fiscal issues required resolution, since some of the participating programs did not have access to the technology. The Associate Dean of Distance Learning at UK, who was committed to a multi-university effort, agreed to open compressed video classrooms at any of the UK Community College sites needed to accommodate students from other locales, with the stipulation that at least one UK student was registered at that site as well. For example, Brescha College needed access to the classroom at Owensboro Community College. This was acceptable because one student participating in U.K.'s TREK-DL project viewed courses from that site.

Scheduling was the third issue determined by the group. Typically, courses offered through distance learning are scheduled approximately one year in advance. Given that it was less than 6 months before the spring semester, the options for dates and times of class offerings were limited. As a result, the group scheduled the class to meet bi-monthly on Saturdays for 4 hours per session. This did not interfere with class offerings at any of the participating programs and allowed the use of compressed video delivery, which had not been scheduled for use during that time slot.

The roles and responsibilities of the cooperating/coordinating faculty were the last issues discussed during the planning sessions. The first author, who was involved with the development of the course, was the lead instructor. Two of the three participating programs used the course in its entirety. In other words, at MSU and U of L, students used the same course syllabus as UK students, including the same requirements, readings, etc. At Brescha College, the faculty member chose to use sections of the course for particular course lectures in existing courses she was teaching. Faculty at MSU and U of L were responsible for grading their students' assignments and disseminating materials, such as quizzes and handouts, sent to them by the lead instructor. The lead instructor for the course was responsible for (a) coordinating the guest lectures of the specialists, (b) disseminating handouts and materials to all sites, (c) conducting a majority of the course lectures, and (d) grading the work of all UK students. In addition, the UK Office of Distance Learning Programs supported a site monitor at each UK locale who operated the technology and, at sites without a faculty member, disseminated materials, proctored quizzes and conducted course evaluations. Site monitors through MSU and U of L had similar responsibilities.

Implementation

After almost 9 months of planning, the multi-university course was implemented via compressed video in the Spring, 1996, semester. In all, approximately 60 students from four colleges and universities attended the course (UK- 22; MSU - 13; U of L - 15 and Brescha - approximately 8). Although initially designed for students in the MSD program, students in other areas of special education (e.g., ECSE) and related services (e.g., SLP) also took the course. As well, by offering the course as a 500 level course, UK was able to offer the course for both graduate and undergraduate credit. Students viewed the course from eight different locations, including three universities and four community college sites. Although UK students were located at all sites, students from other programs attended class at locations different from their fellow students in some circumstances.

The underlying philosophy of educating learners with Deafblindness and Multiple Disabilities is that it requires a team to deliver services (Orelove & Sobsey, 1991). Faculty representing disciplines that would be involved in the education of students with these disabilities taught sections of the course related to their area of expertise (i.e., physical and occupational therapy, speech/language pathology, nursing, and vision). Although the lead instructor delivered lectures on basic concepts related to assessment and programming (Rainforth, York & Vandercook, 1992), this cadre of professionals delivered much of the specific content. The lead instructor used a videotaped assessment of a young girl with Deafblindness as a case study to generate discussion among team members. As well, all lecturers in the course utilized videos of other children with multiple disabilities to provide examples to students of specific instructional issues (e.g., augmentative communication, feeding techniques, and adapted equipment).

To increase interaction between students at different sites, the lead instructor attempted to plan an activity each week that required reflective practice (Major, 1996) of the information covered in class. In this approach to teaching, students were given a problem or issue related to the course content and asked to work with other students at their site to brainstorm solutions and then report back to the instructor. For example, students were asked to identify learning outcomes for a case study utilized throughout the course. By using this approach, students had an opportunity to interact with fellow students and instructors at their respective sites. As well, students had the opportunity to gain insight from students at other sites both from their own as well as other programs. This method increased communication by all involved in the course.

Evaluation

The instructors conducted an evaluation of the course that asked all students to rate both the content (i.e., quality of the course presentations) and the form of the course. In addition, the form provided an opportunity for students to submit written comments on various aspects of the course. (These are addressed in the following section.) The 11 topics and 6 course components addressed on the evaluation are outlined in Table 1. Each item was ranked using a 5 point Liekert scale with 5 indicating the highest ranking and 1 the lowest. Table 1 provides an overview of the results of this evaluation. The mean ranking of each item by all the students (total n=37) completing the evaluation at six (6) of the participating locations is indicated in each column. The bottom row in

Table 1 provides an overall average rating for that site based on the total of all the individual ratings. The final column provides a summary mean rating of each item across all settings.

Overall Evaluation.

The combined rating of the various components ranged from 3.50 to 4.51. The success of the course can be seen in the fact that, on average, all aspects of the course were rated in the upper half of the scale. As well, the overall rating fell in the upper quartile. Cooperating faculty were generally pleased with these ratings for a new course that attempted to address the needs of a diverse student body and called on the students to participate in a non-traditional learning experience. Nonetheless, the range of ratings, the variation across settings, and some of the written comments submitted by students highlight important considerations for future offerings of this or other courses.

The lowest rated aspect of the course was the use of compressed video. While the technology made this unique collaborative course possible, the problems associated with it led to this ranking. Several of the settings experienced problems with the reception of some classes because of difficulties with the transmission network. Additionally, minor distortion and reorientation associated with the compression process was mentioned as a reason some students disliked this method of instruction. The distortion associated with the use of compressed video became pronounced when a videotape is broadcast over the video network. The problem of the disconcerting images may have contributed to the mean rating of 3.67 that students gave to the assessment video.

The problem of interacting with a speaker who was presenting on a television screen seems to have inhibited the ability of some students to ask questions or otherwise interact with lecturers. This inhibition also seems to have limited the effectiveness of several of the presentations, most notably those on occupational therapy, physical therapy, and oral/motor feeding. These particular sessions presented a great deal of content that was new to most of the students and relied heavily on a traditional lecture format. The slightly higher average rating associated with the lecture on vision reflects the fact that this presentation originated from the site where students rated this presentation higher than any other.

While there is variation in the rating of the various course components, it is noteworthy that the range on all rankings was only one point. The cooperating faculty were encouraged to see that the majority of the classroom practices were rated in the upper end of the distribution with the crucial topics of transdisciplinary services and program planning, two areas that formed the central content of the course, being rated in the top three.

Discussion

As noted above, this course grew out of an already existing inter-university collaborative effort. This relationship was crucial to establishing the course and absolutely necessary for its ongoing refinement. The commitment to working together and the positive relationship among faculty was essential for honest reflection on the successes and limitations experienced during this course. Indeed, the faculty found themselves required to implement a truly transdisciplinary (or at least trans-institutional) process to ensure the success of this course. The cooperating faculty consulted regularly during the offering of the course and conducted a series of meetings and phone conversations in the subsequent summer and fall as a post-mortum intended to refine the course for its next offering.

While encouraged by the overall success of the course, all of the collaborators were aware of the need for further development and refinement. The following analyses grew out of this ongoing dialogue and reflects the integration of the evaluation data, the students' written and oral comments, faculty observation of student behavior, and the process of group reflection by the faculty. As the collaborating faculty attempted to organize the disparate sources of information about the course, a series of recurring themes emerged. It is noteworthy that generally these central issues were multidimensional. That is, each of them presented certain opportunities or advantages, while simultaneously presenting a potential pitfall or challenge. Table 2 outlines these major themes and provides a summary statement of advantages and challenges experienced.

Advantages.

All of the advantages outlined in Table 2 can be summarized under the rubric of "equal access." Traditionally, there has been a significant disparity between the educational opportunities available students who elect to attend a university in an urban area. At the most basic level, students who select regional institutions for their higher education experience will not have comparable access to the range of expertise related to the needs of students with severe and multiple disabilities.

This discrepancy does not reflect a lower quality of teacher preparation or inferior faculty at the regional institutions. It is primarily a result of the lack of access to a full array of disciplines required to meet the needs of low incidence, high need students. A variety of disciplines, beyond education, may not represented on the campuses of some of the rural regional institutions. In truth, many rural school districts have a difficulty contracting with providers from disciplines, such as occupational therapy, to meet the needs of their students. When the focus turns to individual professionals with extensive background with students with complex needs, such as deaf-blindness, the pool of rural professionals is essentially non-existent. The net result is that those few professionals who are working in the rural area are overwhelmed with direct service and are not available for even an occasional guest lecture. Further, this absence of sufficient professionals in rural areas frequently means that students even lack the ability to observe best practice in transdisciplinary collaboration during their field experiences in local schools.

This course assures that students across the state of Kentucky have access to the same best practice information. In this regard, the transdisciplinary course fell under the umbrella of Kentucky's extensive effort at educational reform by assuring that all teachers of students with moderate and severe disabilities were prepared in a manner consistent with the state's teacher standards. Also, the dialogue and regional exchange of experience provided all the students with information needed to effectively implement the concepts taught in the course anywhere in the state.

Challenges.

While technology and diversity were two crucial contributors to the value of this course, these two factors lay at the heart of major challenges encountered. A review of the challenges associated with the themes in Table 2 indicates a clear need for faculty and students to develop the skill and comfort required by a new instructional technology.

Using compressed video is not the same as watching a videotape in class or the use of techniques, such as satellite classes. This new technology presents a valuable new media, but it requires that instructors adjust their presentation to use it effectively. Some policy makers have suggested that compressed video technology can be used to allow a single instructor, in a central location, potentially deliver information to hundreds or thousands of students in multiple locations. The experience in this course suggested that such a vision is only valid for the most traditional college instruction for large anonymous lecture classes. In truth, compressed video, with its potential for true interactively is not really necessary for the traditional lecture approach, which may be better suited for satellite delivery. Compressed video instruction is ideal for use in advanced courses in teaching methods or other disciplines which require ongoing interaction between professor and student. However, it is crucial that the interaction be built into all aspects of the course. Only by systematically requiring interaction can the instructor "teach" the students to become comfortable with the technology and not fall into patterns of passive television viewing.

The relationship between the potential for interactively and a diverse student body leads to several totally unanticipated challenges. In general students based in cities were more comfortable with the technology. This led to several highly vocal students at times seizing control of the transmission for extended periods of time to argue over a disagreement with the instructor. While this has potential value in clarifying an obscure or difficult point, in the cases experienced, the issues involved expectations of people with severe disabilities and attitudes towards parents.

A similar challenge emerged when students at one site continually communicated lack of respect for students from a rural background. This interaction reached its nadir when one person was heard demeaning the dialect and background of the students from rural Eastern Kentucky on the open microphone. Obviously, there is potential for this type of problem in any setting where individuals from diverse backgrounds interact, but the physical proximity of a person usually will mean that prejudiced or stereotypic attitudes will not be public expressed. Unfortunately, in the case of compressed video, the distance created by the television monitor provided the protection needed to insult about a quarter of the course participants. Conversely, the immediacy of the media did not shield the hearers.

Recommendations

Based on the experience of the transdisciplinary course delivery in Kentucky, the authors want to offer the following recommendations for any institution or consortium of institutions planning to use compressed video in a manner similar to the one described here.

1. Collaborating faculty and any guest lectures must meet well in advance to develop (a) a common philosophy of instruction, (b) appropriate interactive instructional activities, (c) an understanding of the nature of the student body, and (d) a complementary perspective on course content.
2. Students should be given clear guidance on use of the technology and appropriate rules related to mutual respect and on-line interaction.
3. A clear set of guidelines, related to student on-line time that assure equal access and yet provides for effective management of class time should be articulated.
4. A clear common philosophy of expectations related to the target population of students with disabilities and their families should be stated and reinforced through consistent reminders about such factors as the use of "people first language".
5. Systematic and on-going evaluation data, beyond standard institutional course evaluations, should be collected and used to continually adjust content and presentation.

Conclusion

The first offering of the transdisciplinary course using compressed video faced a wide range of challenges. Nonetheless, the collaborating faculty remain convinced that this is an invaluable tool for enhancing the skills of teachers of students with the most severe disabilities all across Kentucky. None of the difficulties encountered are insurmountable and the potential benefits are significant. At the end of the twentieth century, it is no longer acceptable that distance and isolation serve as an excuse for qualitative differences in the educational opportunities available to teachers-in-training in rural areas. A free, appropriate, public education is guaranteed to all students with disabilities. The fact that a student lives in a rural community does not modify that right. It is the responsibility of State Education Departments and IHEs to learn to work together, using state of the art technology, to ensure all teachers are prepared with state of the art information and quality instructional experiences.

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Table 1

Mean Ranking of Course Components By Participants

		University of Kentucky			Morehead	University	Combined
	Lexington	Ashland	Covington	Hazard	State	of Louisville	
	n=6	n=4	n=2	n=5	n=9	n=11	n=37
Course Topics							
Transdisciplinary Services	5.00	4.75	5.00	4.40	4.33	4.22	4.51
Assessment Lecture	4.67	4.25	5.00	4.40	4.22	3.60	4.19
Assessment Video	4.50	3.75	3.50	3.20	4.22	2.90	3.67
Consensus Activity	4.33	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.00	3.43	4.03
Program Planning	4.83	4.25	4.00	4.20	4.22	4.09	4.27
Physical Therapy	4.33	4.00	3.00	3.60	3.22	4.10	3.78
Occupational Therapy	4.33	3.75	4.00	3.60	3.89	3.80	3.89
Oral Motor/Feeding	4.33	4.25	3.50	3.00	4.11	3.80	3.89
Communication	4.67	4.50	4.50	3.00	4.00	3.78	4.00
IEP Development	5.00	4.50	5.00	4.00	3.22	4.09	4.11
Vision	4.67	4.50	4.50	3.80	4.22	4.73	4.43
Course Format							
Organization	4.83	4.00	4.50	4.00	3.89	3.27	3.92
Lectures	4.67	4.25	4.00	4.60	3.67	3.45	3.97
In-class Activities	4.33	4.75	4.00	4.20	4.00	3.55	4.03
Scope	4.83	4.75	4.00	4.60	4.11	3.18	4.08
Projects	4.83	4.75	4.50	4.40	3.89	3.40	4.11
Compressed Video	3.50	3.75	4.50	4.00	3.33	3.10	3.50
Mean Overall Rating	**4.57**	**4.31**	**4.24**	**3.94**	**3.92**	**3.68**	**4.01**

TABLE 2

Comparison of Advantages and Challenges Associated with Offering a Multi-site, Inter-university, Compressed Video Course

THEMES	
Advantages	Challenges
Diversity	
Sharing of multiple divergent perspectives	Assuring respect and tolerance for different backgrounds
Enrichment that comes from experienced students interacting with inexperienced	Assuring that instruction meets needs of all levels; tolerance of need for clarification for less experienced students
Compressed Video Technology	
Opportunity for direct interaction with students at multiple sites	Student comfort and passivity, overcoming "TV Watching" behavior and fear of being on camera
Opportunity for varied multimedia presentations in class	Technology break down; anomalies in the video transmission that hamper student attention
Time	
Scheduling to meet the needs of nontraditional students, teachers, & others employed full time	Scheduling access to the technology at so many separate locations
Communication	
Ability to effectively explore issues in a manner that increases student awareness of the range of situation they may encounter, opportunity to seek clarification of presentation	Possibility for a single student to "seize the microphone" and dominate the transmission; possibility for some students to effectively hide and the background and never be engaged in dialogue
Convenience	
Students are able to obtain instruction close to home	Lack of opportunity for students at distance sites to "get to know" an instructor
Multiple Instructors	
Diverse expertise and perspectives--a very rich learning experience in which each class is given by an expert	Instructor use of and comfort with the technology; possibility for expert to present material that is over the head of the average student
Cost Effectiveness	
Provides equal access to information to students in all areas of state; Very affordable means to meet needs of state	Labor and technology intensive for each of the individual institutions - not clear it saves them money
Collaboration	
Development of strong working relationship among faculty at diverse institutions	Time needed to achieve this relationship; administrative understanding of the need for this use of time

James E. Whorton, Ed.D.
Sheryl R. Glausier, Ph.D.
University of Southern Mississippi
Hattiesburg, MS

David L. Naylor, Ed.D.
University of Central Arkansas
Conway, AR

Robert L. Morgan, Ed.D.
Indiana Wesleyan University
Marion, IN

"LEISURE AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES CHOSEN BY ADOLESCENTS WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES LIVING IN RURAL AREAS OF ARKANSAS, INDIANA, AND MISSISSIPPI"

The importance of recreation and leisure activities for persons with disabling conditions has been well documented in the literature, as have the issues facing this area of need (Datillo & Rush, 1985; Falvey, 19889; Patton, Beirne-Smith, & Payne, 1990; Schlein & Larsen, 1986; Schloss, Smith, & Keihl, 1986).

While recent research has demonstrated that persons with disabilities can successfully participate in recreation and leisure activities (Falvey, 1989; Schloss et al., 1986), and while recreation and leisure activities may be lifelong, these findings do not necessarily negate the idea that without optimal training for leisure and recreation, disabled individuals may be left with little opportunity for choice. The absence of choice may also increase feelings of failure and learned helplessness (Datillo et al., 1985). Disabled individuals need opportunities to exhibit self-initiated and self-determined behaviors which will allow them to take responsibility for their own choices and actions (Datillo et al., 1985; Nietupuski et al., 1986; Gardner, 1992).

Individuals place a great deal of importance on "choice," and there is a strong relationship between exercising choice and independence. Therefore, this study focused on recreation and leisure activities selected when a group of high school aged individuals, both with and without disabilities were given a choice.

High school aged students (n=222, average chronological age of 16.9 years, with a standard deviation of .7 years) from the states of Arkansas, Indiana, and Mississippi, with and without disabilities, were interviewed by one of their teachers, a student teacher, or one of the researchers using the "Recreation and Leisure Inventory" (Glausier & Whorton, 1995). A brief description of the 222 participants in this study is presented in Table 1.

The purpose of the inventory is to assist in identifying the recreational and leisure preferences of adolescents and young adults with disabilities. Providing programming and services directed toward lifelong participation in recreation and leisure activities requires a knowledge of the likes and dislikes of the individual, as well as the accessibility and availability of recreational and leisure opportunities. For purposes of research, copies of the inventory may be obtained without charge from its authors.

These data were analyzed relative to type of classroom placement, choice of activity, and frequency of participation. These data are presented in Table 2.

Following a review of the data, several salient points seem noteworthy;

1. When asked, "Who usually makes the choice or decision about which activities you will participate in?", 70% (n=155) of the students responded, "Me." [Reg=48, Spec=17, Comb=90]

2. When asked if their activitiy partners had a disability, only 11% (n=24) responded, "Yes." [Reg=2, Spec=20, Comb=2]

3. Of those students interviewed, 65% (n=144) participated in P.E. at school. [Reg=36, Spec=43, Comb=65]

4. Only 17% (n=38) of the students interviewed participated in Special Olympics. [Reg=1, Spec=26, Comb=11]

5. When asked, "Have you ever been turned down for community/city program sports?", 88% (n=196) responded "No." [Reg=55, Spec=47, Comb=94]

While descriptive data, as used in this report, are often times difficult to draw conclusions from, there are some clear and emerging factors to be considered for further research. Individuals with disabilities may not be aware of their options, or even the broad selection of free time activities from which to choose. Though students can communicate their desires, they must be made aware of the options. It should also be noted that many of the most frequently chosen activities in this study (7 of the top 9) were sedentary or passive, and not active or exercise related. This finding, however, does not indicate a great disparity between regular class students and students in either special or combined classes.

In summary, it seems apparent that educators should consider an array of normalized activities for their students, rather than those of a stereotypical segregated or passive nature. When empowered with the ability to participate, lives are greatly enhanced and enriched, and these efforts allow individuals to become active and successful members of the community.

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Table 1
Recreation and Leisure Inventory *Participants (222)

			Participants	
		Reg	Spec	Comb
STATE				
AR	99	39	8	50
IN	72	14	17	40
MS	51		30	16
GENDER				
Female	76	27	22	27
Male	128	30	30	68
RESIDENCE				
Family	198	55	49	93
Foster	2			2

*The average chronological age was 16.9 years, with a standard deviation of .7 years.

Table 2

Recreation and Leisure Inventory:

Students' Chosen Activities & Frequency of Participation

ACTIVITY #	n	FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION			
		Never	Sometimes	Weekly	Daily
#1 T.V.	(201)				
reg	54	0	10	14	32
spec	49	1	7	5	39
comb	93	1	27	11	60
#7 Stereo	(195)				
reg	56	1	5	7	42
spec	39	11	19	6	14
comb	89	5	10	10	67
#16 Movies	(185)				
reg	54	1	35	16	2
spec	39	8	27	12	2
comb	85	8	89	19	8
#5 Friends	(184)				
reg	57	2	3	16	34
spec	31	20	9	5	14
comb	88	11	9	20	53
#17 Eat out	(184)				
reg	54	0	37	11	7
spec	36	9	21	16	3
comb	83	8	42	32	9
#18 Travel	(179)				
reg	55	4	38	9	5
spec	39	10	22	4	2
comb	73	17	44	16	9
#23 Phone	(179)				
reg	50	3	14	5	32
spec	40	14	10	10	15
comb.	80	4	26	13	43
#3 Exercise	(177)				
reg	31	0	13	8	10
spec	36	0	12	5	18
comb	56	1	19	10	23
#25 Sports	(172)				
reg	47	9	21	20	5
spec	43	8	27	6	3
comb	75	11	53	15	3

These activities were each chosen by more than 75% of the students interviewed.

MaryAnn Demchak
Carl R. Morgan
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV

PROVIDING RELATED SERVICES TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS OF NEVADA

According to the implementation regulations for the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (PL 101-476), related services "means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education" (Federal Register, 1992, p. 44803). In addition to transportation, the regulations specify the related services included in Table 1. The regulations also define assistive technology services and devices, which can be included in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) as related services.

Table 1
Related Services Specified Within PL 101-476

1. Speech pathology
2. Audiology
3. Psychological services
4. Physical therapy
5. Occupational therapy
6. Recreation, including therapeutic recreation
7. Early identification and assessment of disabilities in children
8. Counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling
9. Medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes
10. School health services
11. Social work services in schools
12. Parent counseling and training

Related services are supposed to be those services that a student with a disability needs in order to receive an adequate, or appropriate education. Thus, the determination of the related services needed by a particular student is to be individualized (Zirkel & Knapp, 1993). Whether an IEP team is in an urban or rural area, it can be difficult to determine the necessity of related services. Giangreco (1995) suggests that proposed related services must be *educationally relevant* as well as *educationally necessary*. For a related service to be educationally relevant it must be pertinent to the student's IEP. Once it is determined that a related service is educationally relevant it must also be determined if the service is educationally necessary. Giangreco proposes doing so through four "tests":

1. Is there any existing evidence that suggests the absence of the related service will interfere with the student's access to or participation in the individualized educational program? If by not providing the service, the student's benefit from the educational program is jeopardized, then the service is educationally relevant. If education is not jeopardized by the service's absence, then the service is not educationally relevant.

2. If the service passed the first test, then the team must review voids, redundancies, and incongruity of recommendations. For example, if there is overlap between recommendations, the team must decide if that overlap is necessary (e.g., a physical therapist and occupational therapist both

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make recommendations regarding positioning; a speech pathologist and assistive technology specialist make recommendations regarding augmentative communication).

3. The third question suggests reviewing the necessity of the related service with the recommending party as well as the receiver of the service. For example, a speech pathologist proposes services related to oral motor difficulties at lunch time. However, the teacher and paraprofessional have sufficient previous training and experience and it is determined that the service is not needed. On the other hand, such a service could be invaluable to new personnel working with a specific student. (Thus, this test serves as a reminder that related services decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.)

4. The fourth test pertains to whether or not a service provided in one set of circumstances can be appropriately generalized to another context without the direct involvement of related services personnel. For example, if an occupational therapist provided information regarding use of hand splints in one classroom; it is reasonable to assume that this information could generalize to other classrooms. In contrast, it could also be determined that the services are needed in another setting.

Although both urban and rural districts must deal with issues of educational relevance and necessity when determining the need for related services, rural districts have additional, unique variables that impact the delivery of related services.

Rural Issues in Delivering Related Services

The most difficult students to serve in rural areas are those who have low incidence disabilities (e.g., moderate or severe mental retardation and multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairments, emotional disturbance, vision or hearing impairments, and **those students requiring related service**) (Helge, 1984). Typically, in rural areas there are low numbers of students requiring such services and it is not unusual for these students to be geographically dispersed. The difficulty of providing appropriate services is compounded by difficulties in recruiting and retaining professionals with the appropriate qualifications. Factors that interfere with recruitment and retention include (a) professional isolation that can be experienced in rural areas, (b) limitations in professional resources, (c) conservative community attitudes toward innovation, (d) lower salaries than urban areas, and (e) lack of recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities (Marrs, 1984). In some instances it becomes difficult to retain qualified professionals because they were not appropriately trained or prepared for working in a rural or remote area. Often times it becomes necessary to hire individuals without the appropriate qualifications in order to provide services. Additionally, the difficulties in retaining qualified professionals can result in program inconsistencies and instability. The problems pertaining to recruiting and retaining qualified professionals means that some rural students with disabilities may be unserved or underserved (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1991). All of the above issues contribute to obstacles in providing related services to students with disabilities in rural and remote areas.

The purpose of this study is to discuss the results of a survey completed by special education directors of rural districts in Nevada. We will discuss the services provided, the problems encountered in providing these services, and proposed solutions.

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Related Services in Nevada

A survey was sent to the special education directors of 15 of the 17 Nevada school districts. (Two districts were excluded due to being primarily urban.) Eleven of the 15 (73%) districts returned completed surveys. The total number of students in these districts ranged from 125 to 10,524 while the total number of special education students ranged from 25 to 1,146. The total number of schools within the districts ranged from only 3 schools to 19 schools. In many instances, the districts are quite large with distances of over 200 miles between schools.

The survey included questions on the following topics:
(a) related services available within each district, (b) number of students with disabilities receiving each related service, (c) manner in which each related service is provided within the district, (d) related services that are **not** available within the district and the reason(s) why, (e) creative solutions to providing related services to students with disabilities, and (f) barriers to providing related services to students with disabilities.

Survey Results. Table 2 provides a summary of the total number of districts reporting that a specific related service was available as well as the manner in which that service was provided. The only three related services reported as available by all districts were speech pathology, counseling, and psychological services. Although the primary way of providing these services was through the use of school district employees who were certified for that area, some remote districts tended to provide psychological services by contracting with qualified individuals employed by other agencies or districts. Occupational and physical therapy were reported to be available by the majority of the districts; however, these services were typically provided through contracting with private therapists. In many instances, these therapists were willing to travel to the school to provide the services. Six or more of the 11 districts reported that audiology, social work, parent counseling and training, as well as recreation were not available within that district (See Table 3). The most frequent reason provided for unavailability of a service was that the school district had no allocation for personnel in that area. In only three instances was a position open due to difficulties in hiring a qualified person; these areas included occupational and physical therapy as well as rehabilitation counseling. In the area of occupational therapy, two districts had students with need and reported the service as available but had no one to provide services. In one instance the occupational therapist quit just a few weeks prior to this survey. Only one school district reported that **all** related services were available within that district. Within this district it was indicated that services such as audiology, school health services, counseling, social work, medical (for evaluation and diagnostic purposes) were available to all students "as needed" or "by IEP designation."

Table 4 provides a summary of services available based on number of students receiving services within a district. As can be seen most of the available services are provided to fewer than 50 students in a district. As a matter of fact, an overwhelming majority of the districts represented in the "0-50" column actually provided the services to 20 or fewer students. As is evident, the number of students with a need in a particular area is usually low in the rural districts of Nevada. Exceptions to the low numbers of students are "high incidence" services such as speech pathology and psychological services. Most of the respondents indicated that psychological services were available to all special education students through assessment

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or testing. Similarly, it was frequently indicated that school health services were available to all special education students within a district.

Table 2

Number of Districts Reporting Each Method of Providing Related Services

RELATED SERVICE	SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE: CERTIFIED STAFF	SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE: PARAPROFESSIONAL STAFF	CONTRACT VENDOR: SERVICE AT SCHOOL	CONTRACT VENDOR: SERVICE AT VENDOR SITE	TOTAL NUMBER OF DISTRICTS STATING SERVICE AVAILABLE
Audiology	1	0	1	3	5
Speech Pathology	9	2	1	0	11
Occupational Therapy	1	2	6	3	9
Physical Therapy	1	2	7	4	10
School Health Services	9	4	0	0	10
Counseling	10	2	1	1	11
Rehabilitation Counseling	2	0	0	4	6
Social Work	1	0	0	2	3
Parent Counseling and Training	5	0	0	1	6
Medical (evaluation & diagnostic purposes)	2	1	0	4	6
Assistive Technology Services & Devices	7	1	3	0	10
Psychological Services	7	1	4	0	11
Recreation	2	0	1	0	4
Transportation	5	8	0	0	10
Other: (Please Specify) Vision	0	0	1	0	1
Extended School Year	0	0	0	0	1
Community-based job training & supported employ.	1	0	0	0	1
Adapted PE	1	0	0	0	1

Table 3

Reasons Given for Unavailability of Specific Related Services
(Number of Districts)

TOTAL NUMBER OF DISTRICTS REPORTING SERVICE IS UNAVAILABLE	RELATED SERVICE	NO STUDENTS WITH NEED WITHIN DISTRICT	POSITION OPEN; UNABLE TO HIRE QUALIFIED PERSON	NO ALLOCATION FOR THIS AREA
6	Audiology	2	0	2
0	Speech Pathology			
3	Occupational Therapy	1	1	0
1	Physical Therapy	0	1	0
1	School Health Services	0	0	1
0	Counseling			
5	Rehabilitation Counseling	1	1	4
8	Social Work	1	0	5
6	Parent Counseling and Training	0	0	3
5	Medical (evaluation & diagnostic purposes)	0	0	4
1	Assistive Technology Services & Devices	0	0	1
0	Psychological Services			
7	Recreation	0	0	4
1	Transportation			

Table 4

Number of Districts Providing Related Services According to Number of Students

	Number of Students													
Related Service	As Needed	0-50	51-100	101-150	151-200	201-250	251-300	301-350	351-400	401-450	451-500	>500	# Not Reported or Not Known	Not Provided by District
Audiology		2		1									2	6
Speech Pathology		2	3			1		1		1	1		2	0
Occupational Therapy		6	2										2	1
Physical Therapy		8											2	1
School Health Services	5	0		1					1			1	2	1
Counseling	3	3	1	1									3	0
Rehabilitation Counseling	1	2	1										2	5
Social Work Services	2	1											0	8
Parent Counseling & Training	1	1	2										1	6
Medical (evaluation & diagnosis)	2	2											2	5
Assistive Technology		8											2	1
Psychological Services	2	1	2	1			1		1			2	1	0
Recreation	1	2											1	7
Transportation	1	3	1	3								1	2	1

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The greatest barrier to providing related services centered on the districts' inability to recruit qualified personnel for the positions. In many instances it was reported that this difficulty was related to the remoteness of the district or the site where services were needed. For example, one special education director indicated that the greatest barrier was the "distance to more rural sites; many are isolated and we are unable to get qualified people to provide services on site without incurring huge costs." Other districts also reported difficulties related to costs. Another special education director reported that it was difficult to hire qualified physical therapists because "salary is not commensurate with private employment." In a few instances it was reported that related service personnel were willing to provide services to a district but they were unwilling to travel to some sites and so the student, parent, and staff had to travel to the vendor site.

Creative solutions reported as used by the districts to provide related services were numerous. The most common solution was to make use of independent contracts with service providers, particularly in the areas of physical and occupational therapy. In several instances, the providers of these contract services were asked to work in a collaborative or consultative manner with district staff or to train classified staff in the implementation of recommendations. For example, "the vendor trains staff to perform day to day functions." One special education director reported a rather unique means of using two independent contractors for physical therapy and one full-time district employed occupational therapist: "We arrange assignments so that each has particular schools to cover. Those students at a school assigned to the OT who also need PT are evaluated etc. by the PT and a program is developed. The OT carries out the program and the PT consults on a regular basis. The opposite is true at the PT schools." In only two instances did districts report using community services to provide school health services (e.g., through community or public health nurses), rehabilitation counseling (e.g., through Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation), social work (e.g., through a social services agency), and recreation services.

Discussion

Many of the problems discussed in the literature are evident in Nevada. For example, a lack of qualified personnel who are willing to travel or relocate to rural areas, low numbers of students needing a particular service, the geographic disbursement of students, and distances from urban areas all contribute to problems in providing related services. However, the solutions implemented in Nevada are also reflected in professional literature. Katsiyannis (1990) recommended that interagency agreements should be formed with other agencies charged with similar responsibilities (e.g., mental health/mental retardation agencies). It was reported in this survey that two districts are providing services through collaboration with other agencies. Katsiyannis also recommended the use of the private sector or contracts with hospitals in the areas of occupational and physical therapy. Again, this practice is evident in Nevada. A unique solution is the manner in which one school district uses occupational and physical therapists to collaborate with one another while only one is responsible for direct services.

Another professional recommendation, not evident in Nevada at this time, is the use of rural school cooperatives (Fletcher & Cole, 1992). They recommend cooperatives (e.g., a service district that encompasses more than one school district) for the provision of low incidence services such as related services in order to pool resources for common purposes. Such a practice can allow school districts with small numbers of students needing a specific service to meet federal and state requirements for providing services while at the same time dealing with limited resources.

Summary

Rural school districts historically have difficulty in providing services comparable to those provided by urban districts. Although these difficulties are evident in Nevada, there are also viable solutions being implemented. In implementing solutions to providing related services in any rural school district it is important to remember that decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis through the IEP process. There should not be blanket policies regarding related services (e.g., who receives which services, whether or not services are available) (Zirkel & Knapp, 1993). Determination of the need for related services for a particular student involves a process of determining educational relevance as well as educational necessity (Giangreco, 1995). That is, the IEP team must identify those services that are needed for the student to have a reasonable opportunity to benefit from the educational program. Once it is ascertained that related services are needed, the school district must make provisions for that service. Providing related services in rural and remote school districts can be challenging. Although difficulties are evident in Nevada, as they are in any rural state, innovative solutions are also apparent.

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Dawn Munson
Special Olympics International
Washington, D.C.

THE CURRENT RESEARCH EFFORTS OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides an international program of year-round sports training and athletic competition for more than one million children and adults with mental retardation and other related developmental disabilities. Special Olympics programs are active in each of the U.S. states and territories and in over 150 countries throughout the world, with new programs continually being developed.

The mission of the organization is to provide Olympic-type sports training and competition opportunities that will develop physical fitness for children and adults with mental retardation, and provide them the opportunity to become useful and productive citizens within their communities. Special Olympics is unique as a sports organization, because it provides events by ability divisions, for every level of skill, giving each athlete the chance to be successful on the playing field and move toward higher competition.

Twenty-three sports are offered to athletes, with training guides available in each. Special Olympics International also has an accreditation process where coaches attend a training school, complete a practicum with athletes, and become a certified Special Olympics coach.

Through the years, some unique programs that broaden choices and opportunities have been developed for Special Olympics athletes, including:

- Unified Sports®, where persons with and without mental retardation are brought together to play as teammates on the field;
- Motor Activities Training, where athletes with more severe limitations may participate in a training program that rewards their personal best accomplishment rather than a competitive experience;
- Athlete speakers who give presentations to community organizations;
- Athlete officials who gain NBG certification and officiate at Special Olympics competitions; and
- Athlete employees and advocates at each level of the Special Olympics organization.

Each program and new opportunity in Special Olympics is field tested and researched to determine the benefits to the athlete. Prior to the early 1990s, most of the work done in this area was the field testing of new sports guides and new programs. Research was initiated but collected the "good stories," or anecdotal type of information. After all, the athletes knew they were having a good time, the parents knew their children were gaining skills in several areas, the coaches knew that individuals with mental retardation could, with training, participate in sports and the volunteers and spectators knew that Special Olympics athletes displayed a unique joy and spirit for life and sports. The benefits were so obvious to those who were participating. One young volunteer commented, "Why are you doing research? We know it's wonderful."

In 1993, Special Olympics International had a unique opportunity to validate the Special Olympics experience through the gathering of statistical data on our athletes. This opportunity presented itself because, for the first time ever, there was a "Team USA" coming together from programs throughout the United States and traveling to Austria to compete in international competition. These athletes came up through the aforementioned "divisioning" process in Special Olympics, where every athlete has the opportunity to win at their ability level, rather than the best or the fastest advancing. Because of this it was felt that these 104 athletes represented a cross section of Special Olympics athletes throughout the United States. Of the 104 athletes, 54 were male, 50 female, with a mean age of 22 and mean IQ of 59 (overhead).

The questions (overhead) asked of the 1993 Team USA research project included:

- What are the adaptive, social competence, and self-perception features of Team USA?
- Do the social and emotional profiles of Team USA show pre-post World Game differences?
- How do Team USA findings compare to an appropriately matched group of non-Special Olympians?

Standardized measures (overhead) were given these athletes and their caregivers prior to leaving for the competition experience in Austria. These included the following measures given to the Special Olympics athletes and their parents or caregivers:

ATHLETES

- Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (Kaufman & Kaufman, 1990)
- Beery Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration (Beery, 1989)
- Hand Movements subtest from the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (Kaufman & Kaufman, 1984)
- Visual Memory subtest from the Motor-Free Visual Perception Test (Colaruso & Hammill, 1972)
- Sentence Completion Task and Three Wishes

FAMILIES

- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales - Screener Edition. (Cicchetti, Sparrow, & Carter, 1991)
- Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach, 1991)
- Reiss Screen for Maladaptive Behavior (Reiss, 1988)
- Educational Questionnaire
- Questionnaire on Resources and Stress, short form (Friedrich, Greenberg & Crnic, 1983)

Since improving social competence is considered key to integrating persons with mental retardation into community settings where they may live, work and play, these measures focused on self-esteem, communication, socialization and behaviors. Three different studies were used in this research, one relating the social competence, adaptation, and self-perceptions to the length of time in Special Olympics; two, comparing Team USA data to an appropriately matched group of non-Special Olympics athletes (overhead); and three, comparing data to identical data gathered four months after the World Games experience.

Comparing data across all three studies, findings showed that Special Olympics appears to improve social competence. As an example (overhead) age-equivalent comparisons from the Vineland test show comparisons of the communication, daily living skills and socialization of Special Olympics athletes and the non-Special Olympics group. In "positive self" scores (overhead), Special Olympics athletes scored higher in the "personality/affect" and "physical appearance" and had fewer "negative self" indicators.

Study One showed that, relative to age and IQ, length of time in Special Olympics was the most powerful predictor of competence. Study Two found that Special Olympics athletes had higher competence scores than the non-Special Olympics group, and study Three found higher scores in competence at the four month follow-up after the World Games.

This study was completed by Elisabeth M. Dykens, Ph.D., and Donald J. Cohen, M.D., of the Yale Child Study Center and published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, Volume 35, Number 2, February 1996.

Prior to the 1995 Special Olympics World Summer Games in New Haven, Connecticut, this study was replicated in the USA, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Kenya and Russia. Aside from the fitness benefits of sport training and competition, the replication identified other areas which the program should enhance. These included:

- Higher scores in adaptive skills in daily living;
- Involvement in more recreational activities including sport and non-sport activities;
- Being better able to hold a job (getting to work on time, observing time limits on coffee breaks, lunch, etc.);

- Being able to live more independently through increased social competence;
- Having a more positive self-perception and motivation for independence; and
- Having an increased ability to make decisions for oneself.

The findings of the 1993 Dykens and Cohen study and the 1995 replication in the USA and other countries strongly supported the conclusion that Special Olympics is successful in helping individuals with mental retardation deal with their own lives. Compared to groups who had similar conditions, those who participated in Special Olympics consistently did better than those that did not. These differences often reached a very high level of significance.

A group of Special Olympics athletes participating in a Utah Unified Bowling program were given the Achenbach. The same test was also administered to a comparison group of persons with retardation who did not participate in Special Olympics. Very highly significant differences were found between the Special Olympics athletes and the comparison group on the Activity and Socialization domains as well as in the Behavioral scores. The Special Olympics group was significantly less withdrawn, less anxious and depressed, had significantly fewer social and somatic problems, and exhibited significantly less aggressive and delinquent behavior.

Special Olympics International also initiated research into the impact of the Special Olympics experience on the volunteer. In Arkansas, a Sports Camp was established for Unified Sports® where half of the participants were adolescents with mental retardation and the other half were adolescents without mental retardation. When given an opinion adjective checklist of each other (Siperstein 1992) prior to and after the camp, both the Special Olympics participants and the volunteer partners were positively impacted by the experience, with very strong positive changes in their expressed attitudes toward each other.

In another study, Drs. Steven Perlman of the Boston University Dental School and Hillary Broder of the New Jersey Dental School looked at the attitudes of dentists and dental hygienists before and after participation in the Special Athletes, Special Smiles Program. This program was set up at the Special Olympics World Games and provided Special Olympics athletes the opportunity to get a free dental checkup and information on dental care. Significant positive differences were found in the dentistry professionals in their attitudes toward individuals with mental retardation.

The Special Olympics Motor Activities Program is designed for individuals with more severe limitations and based on a personal best goal rather than competition. At a segregated school in Maryland, elementary aged Special Olympics participants were matched with elementary children from a nearby school. The statistical results of this study are being compiled at this time. The program ran for 16 weeks, with the partner children bused to the school each week to work with their athlete in the individualized skill assigned by teachers. The principal, teachers, therapists and parents of the Special Olympics children had numerous comments regarding the positive changes in motor skills and behaviors. The majority of comments revolved around being "happy" about having this relationship, with one parent commenting that her 10-year-old son decided he was no longer going to wear diapers because his partner didn't. All teachers felt that their students "worked harder" when their partners were present. Of the elementary volunteers, these children were given opinion measures prior to any knowledge of their experience and again after the school program was completed. Many of these children and their parents verbalized their positive feelings about the experience, with one mother commenting that her daughter went to the library to check out a book regarding her student's disability and talked about nothing else at the dinner table.

As mentioned, the statistical data is not compiled, but to sum up the impression this type of partner program has on those that are and are not in Special Olympics, I will tell you a story about Joey and Victor. Joey is 8 years old, is learning to use a walker, with a diagnosis of severe cerebral palsy. His partner, Victor, is 9 years old and is in the fourth grade. At the special "Challenge Day" that the children participated in at the end of the school year, each Special Olympics child displayed their achievements with their partner in front of school administrators, teachers, families, media and community representatives. During an interview, Victor was asked what he thought about meeting Joey for the first time. Victor commented, with the expected honesty of a 9-year-old, that when he first met Joey he thought he was going to throw up. "Because of the drooling, you know." After a quick recovery, the reporter asked Victor about how he felt about working and visiting Joey now. Victor smiled and said, "I'm coming back next year to work with Joey. We're working on drooling."

These are the stories that Special Olympics International research is working toward validating. Every family member, every coach, and every volunteer in Special Olympics has a number of them. Stories that tell all associated with the organization that the experience started on the playing field impacts the lives of their loved ones and/or friends and athletes in many areas of their lives. In gathering this research, the goal continues to be improved programs, community awareness and success for individuals with mental retardation in living and working within their communities.

Dr. Robert G. Monahan
Dr. Sheila B. Marino
Lander University
Greenwood, SC

Dr. Rosemary Miller
Beaufort County Schools
Hilton Head Is., SC

Dr. Daria T. Cronic
Brenau University
Gainesville, GA

RURAL TEACHERS', ADMINISTRATORS', AND COUNSELORS' ATTITUDES ABOUT INCLUSION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990) formerly, the *Education of the Handicapped Act* (1975), mandated that students with disabilities be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The least restrictive environment may be a general education classroom or it may be a more restrictive setting such as self-contained classroom. The *Oberti v. Clementon* case (1992) established a federal court precedent in support of inclusion. School districts must justify any decision to exclude a child from the regular class. Often this exclusion process is conducted by regarding the student's daily educational schedule on a class by class basis. Each segment of the day must be discussed and documented in terms of inclusion or exclusion.

Inclusion has its roots in the regular education initiative (REI). Madeline Will (1985) first proposed the regular education initiative as a curricular methodology to educate students with mild disabilities within the mainstreamed classroom. Advocacy efforts ensued and by the end of the 1980's, the concept took on an inclusionary perspective which translated in some educational circles as educating all students in the mainstream, including those students with severe and profound involvement (Rogan & Davern, 1992). Mainstreaming and inclusion are terms that have been used in the literature to describe service delivery models that provide instruction for students with disabilities in the general education classroom with their non-disabled peers. While both terms appear to have the same meaning, inclusion is used in the school reform literature as well as in the special education literature and denotes a concept of full participation with necessary accommodations in a classroom where all students are equal members. Inclusion refers to every child's right to be taught to his highest level of understanding (Kansas State Department of Education, 1992). The Massachusetts Task Force on Education (Feldman, 1991) considers inclusion to be more than mere physical proximity of students with and without disabilities. It is multi-leveled instruction which is sensitive to ability ranges and learning styles, focuses on reciprocal relationships between students, and generalizes knowledge across the continuum. Students in an inclusive setting work in flexible learning environments with the implementation of teaching strategies such as cooperative learning, peer mediated learning, and collaborative and team teaching (Schragg & Burnette, 1993; Villa et al., 1996; Fuchs et al., 1990; NEA, 1992).

The National Association of School Boards of Education (NASBE, 1992) Special Education Study Group developed a list of assumptions that included the following: (1) an integrated education system is best, (2) with support, many student needs can be met by regular teachers, (3) all students have differences and instruction should reflect the individual needs of all students, (4) a situation where there are no choices for separate programming is unacceptable. Critics have noted that these principles are based on the assumption that with proper training, good teachers will be willing and able to teach students with specials needs; yet teachers judged as most competent based on effective school research may not have the most positive attitude toward students with special needs (Roach, 1991). Concerns from several professional groups in the field of education are noted. Teachers expressed concerns about the adequacy of their preparation (Peck et al., 1989). Administrators had concerns about liability, increased parental expectations (Peck et al., 1989), and philosophical differences between teachers (Littrell et al., 1994) . Counselors expressed concerns about the the social and emotional well being of the students involved in inclusion settings (Stainback et al., 1992).

The Massachusetts Task Force presents five areas critical to successful inclusion. They are training, staffing, class size, curriculum, and phasing in the plan (Feldman, 1991). Preparation in the form of information dissemination must be systematic and timely, beginning prior to implementation and continuing throughout the process. It should be comprehensive and inclusive, and presented as professional development rather than obligatory training. It should give professionals the skills, knowledge, and resources to deliver effective educational services to students with disabilities (Gillung & DeFrances, 1992). This comprehensive personnel development will require significant effort on the part of professional organizations, state and local educational agencies, colleges and universities, the federal government, and the private sector (Gillung & DeFrances, 1992). Most importantly, successful inclusion requires increased communication among school personnel and between school personnel and families (Feldman, 1991).

A major factor in the success of inclusion is in the hands of higher education teacher preparation programs. Many teachers do not feel confident in their knowledge and skills of students with disabilities (Schumm & Vaughn, 1992). Collaboration must be modeled among professors (both regular and special education) and discussed and practiced in coursework and field experiences. More preparation in content areas for special educators and more preparation in diverse learners' needs and service delivery models for regular educators must be implemented as a first step toward modeling collaboration at the higher education level. All students should be required to complete field experience in an inclusion classroom.

The present study was designed to evaluate the attitudes of teachers, administrators, and counselors in South Carolina toward inclusion. The intent of the study was to identify areas of need for teacher inservice as well as graduate and undergraduate coursework pertaining to inclusive education. School districts as they address restructuring school reform and higher education as it addresses restructuring will need to plan effective programs based on data collected from public perceptions.

Method

Surveys were randomly distributed to teachers, administrators and counselors throughout South Carolina. The surveys included twenty-five statements rated by using a five point Liekert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The major areas addressed included: the general education teacher's role, attitude and knowledge of collaboration and disabilities, the role of special educators in inclusion, and the impact of special education students in inclusive settings. Three hundred forty-two teacher surveys were returned, one hundred twenty-five counselor surveys were returned, and one hundred administrators surveys were returned.

Results

The results of the survey are reported in Tables 1, 2, and 3. The results of the questionnaire were broken down into six themes: (1) basic philosophical beliefs (questions 10, 13, 17, 18, 25, 12), (2) feasibility of inclusion (questions 1, 6, 8, 9, 4), (3) collaboration (questions 3, 5, 7), (4) finances (questions 11, 24), (5) giftedness (question 16), and (6) perceptions of students with special needs (questions 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23).

Philosophical beliefs were for the most part pro inclusion. Counselors (58%) and teachers (59%) believed that students with special needs have a basic right to be taught in the general education classroom. Only 43% of the administrators felt the same way. Teachers (62%) and administrators (65%) felt that students with special needs would benefit from inclusive settings and would not effect the regular education class negatively (teachers, 62%;

administrators, 60%; counselors, 44%). However, only forty-five percent of the counselors agreed that students with special needs would benefit from inclusion. While the three groups agreed that students with special needs would indeed benefit from inclusion, only 23% of the teachers, 30% of the administrators, and 24% of the counselors believed that students would increase their academic skills in inclusive settings. With regard to who was responsible for the education of students with special needs in the general education class, teachers (51%) and administrators (60%) felt that the primary responsibility for the education of students with special needs belonged to the general educator. Forty percent of the counselors agreed.

The feasibility issue was less promising. Regarding resistance from general education teachers, the survey found that teachers (72%), administrators (60%), and counselors (44%) believed that although inclusion was a good idea, it would meet with much resistance from general educators and that most general educators prefer to send students with special needs to the special education classes for service delivery (teachers ,67%; administrators, 65%); and counselors, 61%). Many responses indicated that general educators received little assistance from special educators (teachers, 35%; administrators, 22%; and counselors, 36%). Only a slightly higher percentage of responses believed that special education teachers provide support for all students (teachers, 57%; administrators, 58%; and counselors 58%) rather than for students with special needs only (teachers, 33%; administrators, 29%; and counselors, 40%).

Collaboration received positive responses. Teachers (84%), administrators (70%), and counselors (72%) believed that general and special educators should collaborate. The three response groups saw no problem with the issue of who would be in charge of the inclusive classroom (teachers, 63%; administrators, 50%; and counselors, 59%); yet the groups' responses revealed that general educators are marginally comfortable in co-teaching with special educators (teachers, 33%; administrators, 40%; and counselors, 29%).

Finances were perceived as not reducing the load of the general classroom teacher (teachers, 21%; administrators, 20%; and counselors, 22%) and that more finances are needed to successfully implement inclusion (teachers, 57%; administrators, 50%; and counselors, 58%).

Approximately one-third of each group saw inclusion as a threat to the education of gifted students in inclusive classrooms (teachers, 34%; administrators, 34%; and counselors 33%).

Perceptions of students with special needs was a mixed bag. While the groups believed that students with special needs would improve their social skills in inclusive settings (teachers, 66%; administrators, 68%; and counselors, 48%), there was still the issue of problem behaviors among students with special needs (teachers, 45%; administrators, 26%; and counselors, 46%) and the ability to adjust to the regular classroom (teachers, 34%; administrators, 19%; and counselors, 30%). Peer acceptance was high (teachers, 42%; administrators, 55%; and counselors 48%); however, students with special needs continued to be stigmatized (teachers, 57%; administrators, 46%; and counselors 40%). Students with special needs were perceived as needing more attention (teachers, 60%; administrators, 71%; and counselors, 55%) and as having lower study skills (teachers, 44%; administrators, 37%; and counselors, 48%).

Discussion

The results of this survey are similar to the results of other research on attitudes towards inclusion. The study points out some areas of need for general education and special education, for public schools and higher education, and for counselors and administrators. When general education teachers were asked if they received help with instructional modifications from special educators, the responses indicated that the direct support was limited. While general educators viewed special educators as being supportive, direct assistance with modification tasks may be limited. This may indicate a need for teacher preparation programs and faculty development to teach all educators how to make curricular modifications to meet the needs of all students. The preferences of general educators in sending students with special needs to the special education teacher while recognizing their responsibility to students with special needs may indicate a lack of confidence in their knowledge and skills. Again, teacher preparation programs and faculty development could address these issues. The responses indicated that general education teachers, although willing, were marginally comfortable in co-teaching an inclusion class. Again, higher education and faculty development could easily address this problem. The survey also indicated a need for lower student teacher ratios in the inclusion class as well as the need for a financial commitment for inclusionary service delivery models.

Many issues need to be addressed for successful inclusion to occur. Toward the implementation of successful inclusion, each school district will need a well defined mission statement which reflects the community's values and beliefs. This mission statement should also be well planned, well communicated, and gradually and methodically implemented. "Rules, regulations, funding patterns, and interagency agreements... are necessary to support the vision of public education." (Gillung and DeFrances, 1992, p. 15)

Change is more likely to be accepted if faculty have the opportunity to understand why the change is needed. They may even embrace the change if given a voice in its development. Reform embraces the past, present, and the future. It is continuous and reflects society's view of what is important for that period of time. This makes reform an open-ended social issue (Rittel & Webber, 1973). Solutions will be difficult to find; however, resolutions have the potential to reflect professional, political, and public sentiments (Kaufman et al., 1990). It is important for a cross section of professionals from the education field discuss inclusion and come to a consensus. No one person has enough knowledge or can be solely responsible for change (York et al., 1989). Many people must be involved to create and sustain the momentum of change. This can be accomplished through taking small, well thought out steps and achieving success, finding natural support, using a participation approach, coming to consensus, employing group problem solving, and communicating effectively with everyone involved (York et al., 1989).

The school reform movement with its focus on inclusive education and the public's demand for accountability require educators to work collaboratively to assure an educated populace. Higher education will need to structure integrated teacher preparation programs that model and focus on collaborative teaching. School districts will be expected to provide individual programming for all students in inclusive environments.

Table I
Responses To Survey On Attitudes Of Teachers Toward Inclusion

		A Strongly Agree	B Agree	C Neutral	D Disagree	E Strongly Disagree
1	Although inclusion of students with special needs is a good idea, one reason it will not succeed is too much resistance from regular education teachers	15%	57%	22%	3%	3%
2	Regular education teachers have the instructional skills and educational background to teach students with special needs	3%	9%	13%	45%	30%
3	Special education and regular education teachers should demonstrate collaboration with all students with special needs in the regular education classroom	51%	33%	11%	5%	0%
4	The regular education teacher receives little assistance from special education teachers in modifying instruction for students with special needs	9%	26%	29%	31%	5%
5	Bringing special education teachers into regular education classrooms can cause serious difficulties in determining "who is in charge".	5%	14%	18%	51%	12%
6	Regular education teachers prefer sending students with special needs to special education classrooms than have special education teachers deliver services in their classroom	22%	45%	23%	6%	4%
7	Regular education teachers are comfortable co-teaching content areas with special education teachers	3%	30%	33%	30%	4%
8	Special education teachers provide educational support for all students.	14%	43%	24%	18%	1%
9	The special education teacher only provides assistance to those students with special needs	7%	26%	18%	27%	22%
10	Regular education teachers have the primary responsibility for the education of students with special needs in their classroom	12%	39%	12%	25%	12%
11	The redistribution of special education resources into the regular education classroom decreases the instructional load of the regular education teacher	4%	17%	28%	31%	20%
12	The inclusion of students with special needs negatively affects the performance of regular education students	6%	12%	20%	42%	20%
13	Students with special needs have a basic right to receive their education in the regular classroom.	18%	41%	23%	15%	3%
14	Students with special needs improve their social skills when placed in a regular class.	21%	47%	17%	11%	4%
15	Students with special needs lose the label of being "stupid", "strange", or "failures" when placed in the regular education classroom	14%	19%	10%	38%	19%
16	Gifted students are neglected in inclusive classrooms	18%	16%	21%	34%	11%
17	Students with special needs benefit from inclusion in the regular education classroom	15%	47%	24%	13%	1%
18	Special needs students do better academically in inclusive classrooms	8%	15%	45%	27%	5%
19	Students with special needs require more attention and assistance than the regular education teacher can provide	28%	43%	17%	7%	5%
20	Students with special needs demonstrate more behavior problems than regular education students	8%	18%	38%	33%	3%
21	Students with special needs adjust well when placed in regular education classrooms	1%	16%	28%	48%	7%
22	Peers are not accepting of students with special needs in the regular classroom	4%	10%	31%	48%	7%
23	The study skills of students with special needs are inadequate for success in the the regular education classroom	6%	31%	32%	27%	4%
24	Although inclusion of students with special needs is important, the necessary resources are not available for it to succeed	17%	40%	21%	18%	4%
25	Families are supportive of inclusive classrooms	7%	27%	38%	21%	7%

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Table II
Responses To Survey On Attitudes Of Administrators Toward Inclusion

		A Strongly Agree	B Agree	C Neutral	D Disagree	E Strongly Disagree
1	Although inclusion of students with special needs is a good idea, one reason it will not succeed is too much resistance from regular education teachers	25%	35%	20%	10%	10%
2	Regular education teachers have the instructional skills and educational background to teach students with special needs	16%	15%	15%	35%	20%
3	Special education and regular education teachers should demonstrate collaboration with all students with special needs in the regular education classroom	50%	20%	10%	20%	0%
4	The regular education teacher receives little assistance from special education teachers in modifying instruction for students with special needs	12%	20%	23%	25%	20%
5	Bringing special education teachers into regular education classrooms can cause serious difficulties in determining "who is in charge"	16%	14%	18%	40%	10%
6	Regular education teachers prefer sending students with special needs to special education classrooms than have special education teachers deliver services in their classroom	20%	45%	20%	10%	5%
7	Regular education teachers are comfortable co-teaching content areas with special education teachers	15%	25%	35%	20%	10%
8	Special education teachers provide educational support for all students	17%	41%	22%	15%	5%
9	The special education teacher only provides assistance to those students with special needs	9%	20%	15%	34%	22%
10	Regular education teachers have the primary responsibility for the education of students with special needs in their classroom	20%	40%	10%	17%	13%
11	The redistribution of special education resources into the regular education classroom decreases the instructional load of the regular education teacher	7%	13%	28%	30%	22%
12	The inclusion of students with special needs negatively affects the performance of regular education students	13%	12%	15%	40%	20%
13	Students with special needs have a basic right to receive their education in the regular classroom	23%	20%	25%	20%	12%
14	Students with special needs improve their social skills when placed in a regular class	25%	41%	19%	11%	4%
15	Students with special needs lose the label of being "stupid", "strange", or "failures" when placed in the regular education classroom	17%	23%	20%	30%	10%
16	Gifted students are neglected in inclusive classrooms	20%	14%	18%	35%	13%
17	Students with special needs benefit from inclusion in the regular education classroom	25%	40%	18%	7%	10%
18	Special needs students do better academically in inclusive classrooms	10%	20%	35%	11%	24%
19	Students with special needs require more attention and assistance than the regular education teacher can provide	20%	40%	18%	7%	10%
20	Students with special needs demonstrate more behavior problems than regular education students	27%	18%	30%	10%	15%
21	Students with special needs adjust well when placed in regular education classrooms	7%	27%	28%	30%	8%
22	Peers are not accepting of students with special needs in the regular classroom	8%	20%	30%	34%	8%
23	The study skills of students with special needs are inadequate for success in the the regular education classroom	14%	30%	25%	28%	5%
24	Although inclusion of students with special needs is important, the necessary resources are not available for it to succeed	15%	35%	24%	20%	6%
25	Families are supportive of inclusive classrooms	6%	20%	40%	24%	10%

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Table III

Responses To Survey On Attitudes Of Counselors Toward Inclusion

		A Strongly Agree	B Agree	C Neutral	D Disagree	E Strongly Disagree
1	Although inclusion of students with special needs is a good idea, one reason it will not succeed is too much resistance from regular education teachers	20%	24%	20%	16%	20%
2	Regular education teachers have the instructional skills and educational background to teach students with special needs.	24%	16%	20%	8%	32%
3	Special education and regular education teachers should demonstrate collaboration with all students with special needs in the regular education classroom.	52%	20%	12%	12%	3%
4	The regular education teacher receives little assistance from special education teachers in modifying instruction for students with special needs.	12%	24%	36%	16%	12%
5	Bringing special education teachers into regular education classrooms can cause serious difficulties in determining "who is in charge".	4%	16%	16%	36%	23%
6	Regular education teachers prefer sending students with special needs to special education classrooms than have special education teachers deliver services in their classroom.	23%	38%	20%	12%	7%
7	Regular education teachers are comfortable co-teaching content areas with special education teachers.	6%	23%	26%	37%	8%
8	Special education teachers provide educational support for all students.	18%	40%	22%	16%	4%
9	The special education teacher only provides assistance to those students with special needs.	12%	28%	21%	19%	20%
10	Regular education teachers have the primary responsibility for the education of students with special needs in their classroom.	8%	32%	24%	24%	12%
11	The redistribution of special education resources into the regular education classroom decreases the instructional load of the regular education teacher.	8%	14%	24%	32%	23%
12	The inclusion of students with special needs negatively affects the performance of regular education students.	16%	10%	32%	20%	22%
13	Students with special needs have a basic right to receive their education in the regular classroom.	20%	38%	16%	16%	10%
14	Students with special needs improve their social skills when placed in a regular class.	18%	30%	19%	24%	9%
15	Students with special needs lose the label of being "stupid", "strange", or "failures" when placed in the regular education classroom.	11%	12%	35%	26%	16%
16	Gifted students are neglected in inclusive classrooms.	13%	20%	24%	32%	11%
17	Students with special needs benefit from inclusion in the regular education classroom.	10%	35%	25%	16%	14%
18	Special needs students do better academically in inclusive classrooms.	8%	16%	40%	20%	16%
19	Students with special needs require more attention and assistance than the regular education teacher can provide.	20%	35%	20%	14%	11%
20	Students with special needs demonstrate more behavior problems than regular education students.	22%	24%	26%	20%	8%
21	Students with special needs adjust well when placed in regular education classrooms.	16%	14%	30%	20%	12%
22	Peers are not accepting of students with special needs in the regular classroom.	12%	16%	24%	35%	13%
23	The study skills of students with special needs are inadequate for success in the the regular education classroom.	16%	32%	28%	16%	8%
24	Although inclusion of students with special needs is important, the necessary resources are not available for it to succeed.	14%	44%	16%	14%	12%
25	Families are supportive of inclusive classrooms.	12%	28%	32%	20%	8%

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Mary Susan E. Fishbaugh
Director of Professional Practices
Ernest Rose
Dean of the College of Education & Human Services
Montana State University-Billings
Billings, MT
Jo Jakupcak
TIE Coordinator
Susan Bailey-Anderson
MBI Coordinator
Montana Office of Public Instruction
Helena, MT

MONTANA TRAINING FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (TIE) AND MONTANA BEHAVIORAL INITIATIVE (MBI): DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF TWO RURAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Introduction

Montana is a large rural state. Fourth in size, it is 44th in population. The largest metropolitan area in the state is Billings with a population of under 90,000 people. As a result of the 1990 census, the state lost one of its two representatives to Congress. Because of vast rural stretches, sparse population, and remote rural schools, Montana's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Council (CSPD) is very active. To meet the professional development needs of isolated special education teachers and related services personnel, the state CSPD council regionalized beginning in December, 1993. By assessing personnel development needs in each of five special education regions, the state council can better provide continuing education and training specific to regional concerns. Two CSPD projects, however, are statewide. The Montana TIE project was proposed to address the need for inclusion information and training. MBI is an attempt to support educators as they work with increasing numbers of students with behavioral disorders. Both projects address overall state priorities for personnel development as assessed through the biennial CSPD survey, but both depend upon regionally based consultation.

Montana Training for Inclusive Education

Montana Training for Inclusive Education (TIE) is a program of inservice training, technical assistance, and peer coaching activities to increase opportunities for students with disabilities to be served in general education classrooms. Over a five-year funding period, local education agency teams are being trained in strategies for cooperative learning and inclusion, and techniques for team-building, collaboration, and peer coaching. The teams receive technical assistance as they implement training at their individual sites. Each team includes six people: regular and special education teachers, an administrator, a member from related services, a paraprofessional, and a parent. Working together, these individuals form an effective and supportive system for initiating inclusive education to the extent appropriate to meet the needs of an individual student with disabilities.

Unique features of this project include regional trainers/consultants, local site teams, and peer coaches. Regional trainers/consultants provide a cost-effective rural service delivery model for inservice training and technical assistance. The regional consultant model ensures locally relevant service delivery to address diverse needs in a large, rural state. Training of local teams develops commitment, cooperation, and collaboration among the individuals who are key to effective integration of students with disabilities into regular classrooms. Peer coaches create a mechanism for supporting the changes required for an inclusive education approach at the local site following training.

The project began three years ago with eighteen teams. The teams came together in January of 1994 for initial information and training. Following a three day retreat, the teams returned to their sites to develop site specific goals and objectives. Throughout the spring, teams participated in five teleconferences over the state's MetNet system. Two days were devoted to inclusion strategies, and three were devoted to collaboration, peer coaching, and conflict resolution. MetNet presentations were a collaborative effort by faculty from both the University of Montana and Montana State University-Billings. After completing a year of application and training, teams were ready to implement TIE at their sites. Each local team was supported by a regional inclusion consultant, on-call as needed for additional training, concept clarification, or troubleshooting.

The initial team retreat and each MetNet training session were evaluated through a Likert type rating and participant comments (Figure 1). Subsequent training modifications have been based on evaluation results. During the first year of implementation, teams maintained logs of team activity (Figure 2) and selected a student to serve as a TIE case study (Figure 3). Through these evaluation efforts, it became apparent that 18 teams were too many to manage for everyone involved--project coordinator, inclusion consultants, and project evaluators. As a result, the second and third project tiers have been limited to nine teams, each. Teams remain actively involved in the project for two years, the training period and initial implementation year. Future evaluation will survey teams after two years of implementation to determine if inclusion efforts continue beyond active project involvement.

The Montana Behavioral Initiative

The Montana Behavioral Initiative is a comprehensive staff development venture created to improve the capacities of schools and communities to meet the diverse and increasingly complex social, emotional and behavioral needs of students. The initiative assists educators and community services personnel to develop the attitudes, skills and systems necessary to help each student leave public education with the social competence needed to succeed in society and the workplace. An essential component of MBI is the development of model community sites to provide educators and social service providers validated strategies for responding to challenging behaviors proactively. Through the implementation of the model sites, schools work in coordination with the Juvenile Justice system and other community social agencies to extend the range and quality of services available to youth to help them achieve the positive social, emotional and behavioral skills necessary for life success. The program emphasizes recognizing responsibility, problem solving, and ongoing dialogue among agencies and juveniles in need of assistance. The model community/school sites provide the opportunity for each community to address its own specific needs while creating a framework for intervention that can be disseminated to and replicated in other communities.

The Montana Behavioral Initiative Task Force was formed in the Fall of 1994. Founded to provide child-care professionals assistance, through training and collaboration, in serving youth with challenging social, emotional, and behavioral needs, the group meets regularly throughout the year. It was the Task Force that initiated the Montana Behavioral Initiative project, organized two summer MBI Institutes, solicited applicants for model sites, coordinated activities of regional behavioral consultants, and continues to oversee project implementation.

Five community/school partnerships were selected in the spring of 1995. Located throughout Montana, each site selected teams of educators, parents, and community representatives. Model site teams require more than school personnel, so that an integrated approach is taken to meeting student needs. The original site teams came together for a retreat, the first MBI Institute during the summer 1995 and were trained by nationally known leaders in the field of emotional/behavioral disabilities. The teams surveyed their sites to determine site specific needs, and developed goals to address them.

Components of the Montana Behavioral Initiative that are viewed as essential for project success include the summer Institute, team training by nationally known experts, the Task Force as an advisory council, ongoing technical assistance by regional behavioral consultants, information sharing by sites with other schools, and ongoing project evaluation.

Initial evaluation efforts focused on Institute evaluation, and qualitative data from project sites. The Institute evaluations were similar to TIE MetNet evaluation. Numerical results were subjected to computerized data analyses and participant comments were summarized. Each site kept a team log (Figure 2) and selected a student as a case study (Figure 3). Because the MBI Task Force has requested a quantitative approach, the evaluation format has been entirely revised.

Current and Future Evaluation of Both TIE and MBI

Evaluation strategies for both projects have been similar. The projects have both been grant funded and the grants specified the following evaluation components.

Formative evaluation:

- Training workshop evaluations;
- Documentation of team meetings;
- Team/individual journals of activity; and
- Ongoing case study of one student at each project site.

Summative evaluation:

- Pre/post attitude surveys;
- Pre/post data on number an amount of time for included students (TIE) or number and severity of behavioral referrals (MBI);
- Implementation of project training at sites; and
- Impact of project activity on case study student progress.

Using this format, three TIE reports have been completed and two MBI reports. It has been very difficult to collect the team logs. Some teams maintained the logs naturally; for others journalling was difficult and time consuming Consequently, the pictures gained of team progress varied to the extreme. In addition, the case study was an obstacle to team progress, rather than documentation of team success. Students tend to move in and out of schools so maintaining one student for a case study became impossible. The result of less than satisfactory documentation through qualitative data sources has been revision of both TIE and MBI evaluation.

The revised evaluation package is composed of a list of potential data sources, and simplified forms for collecting/reporting results (Figure 4). For the TIE project, two surveys may be used--a Questionnaire on Inclusion and a Questionnaire on Collaboration. For MBI the site survey addresses student, staff and community perceptions of school safety. Based on survey results (Figure 5), each site is to determine site-specific goals and objectives (Figure 6). Progress on goals will be determined using a form by TIE teams that documents increased student inclusion (Figure 7) or a form by MBI teams that documents decreased numbers of office disciplinary referrals.

Information dissemination with regard to both projects will be in the form of site brochures (Figure 8). For a TIE site, the brochure will highlight needs assessment, resulting goals and objectives, amount of time students with disabilities are included in regular education classrooms and types of disabilities included. For MBI teams, the brochure will document changes in public perception of school site safety, site goals, and a decrease in numbers and severity of office disciplinary referrals.

Summary

Montana Training for Inclusive Education and the Montana Behavioral Initiative are two state-wide projects that were initiated to address educational needs as assessed through a biennial Comprehensive System of Personnel Development survey. Although the projects address very different needs, they use similar strategies in order for effective implementation in a large, rural state. Both bring teams together initially for intra-team building and inter-team networking. Both regionalize teams and use regional consultants for ongoing team support and technical assistance. Both stress site specific needs assessment and team goal setting. Both employ external evaluators in order to document overall project efficacy in terms of individual site progress.

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METNET PRESENTATION

TOPIC:____________________

DATE:__________

	Excellent				Poor
The organization of the workshop was	5	4	3	2	1
The work of the presenter(s) was	5	4	3	2	1
The information presented was	5	4	3	2	1
The location of the workshop was	5	4	3	2	1
The METNET presentation was	5	4	3	2	1
As compared to an on-site workshop, this was	5	4	3	2	1

The stronger features of the workshop were

The weaker features of the workshop were

The benefits of this METNET experience were

The drawbacks of this METNET experience were

TIE SCHOOL ______________________________

TEAM MEMBER ____________________________

Figure 1. TIE MetNet Evaluation Form

The Team Log is an ongoing record of team/individual activity. Records should be kept for each team meeting. Individual team members are encouraged to maintain individual logged reflections of project involvement. The log should be kept in a three-ring binder, tabbed monthly. Duplicate the log every three months and forward the copy to us at MSU-Billings. In addition, send any general school information such as the student handbook, administrative reports, school improvement goals, etc.

TEAM LOG

DATE: ____________ **SITE:** ________________________

TEAM MEMBER(S): ____

____

Figure 2. TIE/MBI Team Log Form

STUDENT CASE STUDY

The student case study may include, but is not limited to the following information:

Individual Student ID Information

- Name
- Age
- Gender

Pertinent Background Information

- Family Composition
- Ethnic/Cultural Background
- Medical History
- Educational History

Current Educational Information

- Grade Level
- Achievement Level(s)
- Type of Class Placement
- Social Competence

Figure 3. TIE/MBI Student Case Study Form

POTENTIAL DATA SOURCES FOR DEMONSTRATING TIE BASED CHANGE

Initial Survey Results

- Staff Questionnaire on Inclusion
- Staff Questionnaire on Collaboration

School Goals Based on Survey Results

- One goal for each problem area

Strategies Toward Meeting Each Goal

- Two strategies for each goal

Numbers/Hours of Student Inclusion/Staff Collaboration

- Numbers of students included and hours annually for the past 3 school years
- Numbers of students included and hours for the first 2 years following TIE training
- Numbers of staff collaborating and hours annually for the past 3 school years
- Numbers of staff collaborating and hours for the first 2 years following TIE training

Observations

- Within a school site
- Between school sites

Two-year Follow-up Survey Results

- Staff Questionnaire on Inclusion
- Staff Questionnaire on Collaboration

Figure 4. TIE Revised Evaluation Packet

SURVEY RESULTS REPORT

_____ Initial _____ Date
_____ Two Year Follow-up _____ Date

QUESTIONNAIRE ON INCLUSION

- Staff Mean _____

QUESTIONNAIRE ON COLLABORATION

- Staff Mean _____

Figure 5. TIE Survey Results Report

SITE GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

_____ Initial _____ Date
_____ Two Year Follow-up _____ Date

GOAL 1 ______________________________
____

Strategy 1.1 ______________________________
____

Strategy 1.2 ______________________________
____

GOAL 2 ______________________________
____

Strategy 2.1 ______________________________
____

Strategy 2.2 ______________________________
____

GOAL 3 ______________________________
____

Strategy 3.1 ______________________________
____

Strategy 3.2 ______________________________
____

GOAL 4 ______________________________
____

Strategy 4.1 ______________________________
____

Strategy 4.2 ______________________________
____

GOAL 5 ______________________________
____

Strategy 5.1 ______________________________
____

Strategy 5.2 ______________________________
____

Figure 6. TIE/MBI Site Goals and Implementation Strategies

INCLUSION/COLLABORATION REPORT

_____ Initial _____ Date

_____ Two Year Follow-up _____ Date

PRE TIE TRAINING			
	Number of Students Included and Total Hours	**Type(s) of Disabilities**	**Number of Staff Collaborating and Total Hours**
Year			
Year			
Year			
POST TIE IMPLEMENTATION			
	Number of Students Included and Total Hours	**Type(s) of Disabilities**	**Number of Staff Collaborating and Total Hours**
Year			
Year			

Figure 7. TIE Inclusion/Collaboration Report

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ALL ABOUT MBI

The Montana Behavioral Initiative

MBI

Spotlights

ALL ABOUT (SITE NAME)

(SITE NAME)

MBI Evaluation
College of Education & Human Services
Montana State University-Billings
1500 North 30 St.
Billings, MT 59101

Figure 8. MBI Proposed Brochure

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SITE SURVEY RESULTS

PRE MBI

Staff

- Treatment from staff
- Treatment from students
- Safety

Students

- Treatment from staff
- Treatment from students
- Safety

Teacher Contact with Agencies

POST MBI

Staff

- Treatment from staff
- Treatment from students
- Safety

Students

- Treatment from staff
- Treatment from students
- Safety

Teacher Contact with Agencies

SCHOOL GOALS

GOAL 1

- Strategy 1.1
- Strategy 1.2

GOAL 2

- Strategy 2.1
- Strategy 2.2

GOAL 3

- Strategy 3.1
- Strategy 3.2

GOAL 4

- Strategy 4.1
- Strategy 4.2

GOAL 5

- Strategy 5.1
- Strategy 5.2

OFFICE REFERRAL REPORT

PRE MBI

Common area(s) for referrals

- Year 1
- Year 2

Types of behaviors

- Year 1
- Year 2

Staff making referrals

- Year 1
- Year 2

POST MBI

Common area(s) for referrals

-

Types of behaviors

-

Staff making referrals

-

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Jean P. Lehmann
Jacque Hyatt
Pat Sample
Colorado State University

PARTNERS IN TRANSITION: EMPOWERING TEACHERS TO PROVIDE TRANSITION SERVICES

Facilitating a smooth transition from school to adult life for students with disabilities is a goal high schools are directed to perform by federal legislation (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1990). Meeting the letter of the law requires that teachers and administrators be knowledgeable and interested in this aspect of their work. However, several studies have shown that neither group is perceived as proficient in this arena (Lombard, Hazelkorn, & Neubert, 1992). In fact, Baer, Simmons, and Flexner (1996) concluded from their survey that school districts tend to comply with paperwork requirements of the law but are not actually providing adequate transition experiences for students with disabilities.

Reasons for the inadequacies are many. Historically, special education teachers, related services such as occupational therapy, and their respective administrations have had little training regarding the nature and procedures relative for quality transition services (Greene, Albright, Koska, & Beecham-Greene, 1991). Furthermore, resources needed to support students to enter jobs, learn to live independently, and develop relationships with local communities are meager at best. This paper describes one attempt to confront the need for professionals in rural school systems to provide comprehensive transition services. Through a collaborative effort between a university education department and a occupational therapy department, educators in rural school districts participated in staff development in the area of transition from school to adulthood. The objectives of this paper are to:

a. provide a general overview of a staff development program being implemented in rural school districts in two western states,
b. describe the role of university personnel that evolved during the course of the project and was defined by secondary school educators,
c. report specific strategies used to empower secondary educators as they identified how the transition process could best be integrated into their schools,
d. present a model for delivering inservice/preservice courses to rural settings developed as a result of this project,
e. evaluate the problems associated with the acceptance of this model.

Staff Development

The project staffs' decision to address problems associated with transition services in rural schools was based upon literature citing the importance of staff development efforts in rural settings. It is widely acknowledged that providing staff development is a key component for motivating teachers to remain in a school district (Helge, 1981, 1984, Westling & Whitten, 1996). Staff development for rural areas however, has been and continues to be problematic (Russell, Willis, & Gold, 1994). For instance, the distance between universities who provide training to educators and occupational therapists and schools in outlying areas often prevents frequent face-to-face contact and makes attending classes difficult, particularly during inclement weather seasons. Geographic distances also mean that the university faculty is not aware of local issues and politics that make implementing changes in schools difficult. It is therefore necessary for university faculty to understand the environmental factors that complicate the delivery of transition services in rural settings, such as limited job possibilities, no public transportation and the reality that vast expanses of geographic distances must be traversed in order to perform even the most mundane of tasks such as grocery shopping (Markve, Morris, Ferrara, & Rudrud, 1992). To accommodate educators' needs the following elements were considerations in the design of the PIT staff development program.

Table 1

Course	Content	Delivery Modality
Internship	• Developed based on self-assessment	Time: throughout the year Location: individual choice
Transition and Community-Based Instruction	• overview of transition • job development • teacher roles in transition • interagency collaboration • families • empowerment	Time: 2 weeks in summer Location: On campus
Vocational Assessment	• alternative assessment strategies • traditional assessment • collection of data • interpretation of information • planning process	Taught in a condensed format with a combination of face to face and self-study. Time: 2 weeks in summer or full spring semester Location: On and off campus Distance Education
Career Development Institute	• labor market issues • employment opportunities • employment services • experience in select businesses	Time: 2 weeks Location: On campus
Summer Institute: Rural Transition Issues	content derived from focus groups of project participants	Time: 1 week summer course Location: combination of campus and distance delivery

As shown in Table 1, the staff development program is comprised of five courses. Four of the courses; Internship, Transition and Community-Based Instruction, Career Development Institute, and Vocational Assessment were included in the program because not only does their content match the knowledge base identified as critical to transition services (Kohler, 1994),they can also be used by education staff to become credentialed vocationally. The fifth course, Summer Institute: Rural Transition Issues, was designed specifically to meet the needs of this project to address issues regarding the provision of transition services in rural communities.

Empowerment Strategies

Based upon the philosophy of empowerment, the Partners in Transition (PIT) model fosters the empowerment of educators to solve problems with the support of the university. This model is a derivative of the collaborative problem-solving model described in the consultation literature (Kurpius & Fuqua, 1993; Kurpius, Fuqua, & Rozecki, 1993; West & Idol, 1993). As

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discussed by Westling and Whitten (1996), recipients of training may themselves be the best sources for program development structure and content. The five strategies promoted by Smith and his colleagues were utilized to make the staff development program relevant to rural constituents and to overcome the lack of understanding of local needs by university personnel (Smith, 1996; Smith, Edelen-Smith, & Stodden, 1996). The strategies outlined by Smith, et. al. are similar to those employed in the PIT project:

1. developing a vision statement in conjunction with the local district to focus the group on the desired outcome of the training,
2. generating information from local groups regarding their staff development needs,
3. designing internship experiences based upon results of educators self evaluations,
4. development of coursework that culminates in action plans for district personnel, and
5. conducting regular networking meetings with educators to review their efforts relating to transition.

Operationalizing these strategies meant that the role of the university personnel involved in this project had to change. Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 help to illustrate the process used in PIT to develop the supports, course delivery methods, and institute contents that were unique to one participating rural school district.

Vision Statement

The vision statement relates to the desired outcomes for students in the district. This statement provides a guide to the destination of the project (Senge, 1990). Following the development of the vision, it was the responsibility of university personnel to assist the project participants arrive at their destination.

Table 2

VISION STATEMENT
To prepare students to become valued members of the community by providing experiences, information and support that enables them to identify their futures in terms of living, work, recreation and social situations.

Skills Assessment

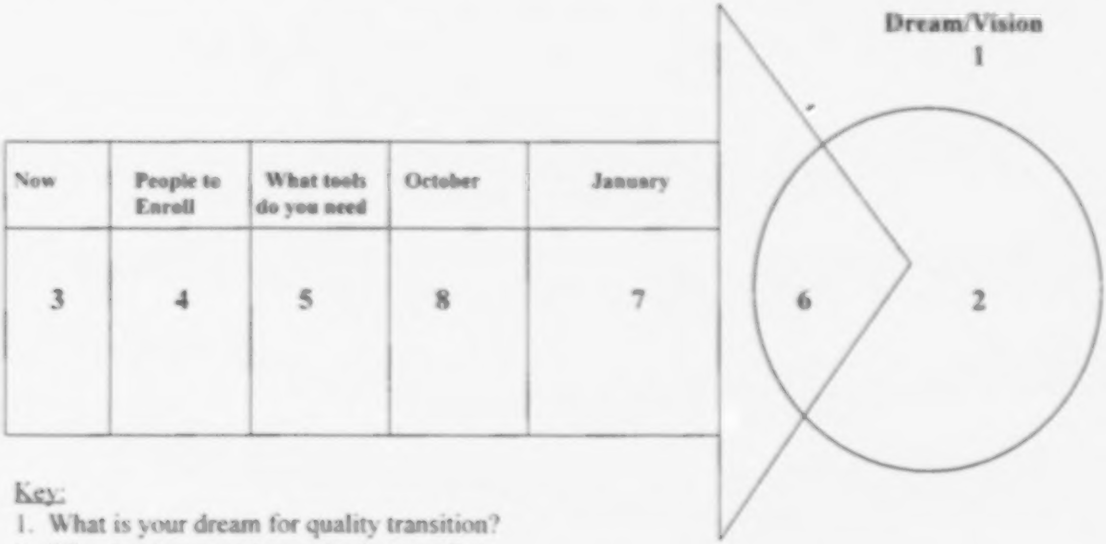
Using both a focus group format and an Individual Skills Assessment (Table 3), the needs of project participants were further defined. The skills assessment was used to help individual project participants tailor the internship experience to personal needs. They were counseled to evaluate their strengths and needs so that university advisors could design or identify internship experiences that would provide the most relevant and useful information. Thus, course instructors had to ensure that course content would complement areas of interest and need identified by participants. For instance, the Summer Institute for one rural district focused on three topics; team building, family involvement, and postsecondary options. Course content in the existing courses was altered to address primary concerns of participants. In fact, specific speakers and curriculum materials were selected to address concerns. There was less flexibility in the courses other that the Summer Institute and the Internship, because they are open to all students and not just those involved in the project.

The Individual Skills Assessment was designed in a 5-point Likert format. Participants were asked to rate their skills on a scale of 1-5. Table 3 lists the standards that are contained in the Individual Skills Assessment.

Individual Action Plan

Using the person centered planning concept, each participant was asked to design a plan incorporating their personal strengths and needs, the strengths and needs of their district and the vision statement that was developed by the cohort of project participants. This plan was designed using the planning process known as PATH (Pearpoint, O'Brien, & Forest, 1993), using a timeline of one year. This planning process consists of eight steps that begin with the individual identifying their vision or outcome first and then returning to the present and continuing to build the plan from what exists now out to the vision. Action Plans were reviewed to determine if they described activities that would lead to participants' vision for students. Figure 1 illustrates more fully the process by outlining the questions asked at each step and the format used to frame the plan.

Figure 1



Key:
1. What is your dream for quality transition?
2. What has happened over the last year?
3. As of today, looking at your present situation, describe transition.
4. Identify the people who can help with your vision.
5. What knowledge, skills, relationships, do you need?
6. What will you have accomplished by the end of the year?
7. What's going on now? What has happened since October?
8. Identify the steps taken, people who are supportive, what you've accomplished.

Adapted from Pearpoint, O'Brien, & Forest, 1993

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Table 3

TRANSITION SKILLS ASSESSMENT

I. ASSESSMENT STANDARD

1. Systematic data collection using both formal and informal procedure.
2. Use of assessment results for program planning.
3. Maintains a process for communicating assessment information to involved parties.

II. INDIVIDUALIZED TRANSITION PLAN STANDARD

1. Convenes planning teams consisting of parents, school personnel, the student, and appropriate adult service providers.
2. Creates written individualized transition plans (ITP's).
3. Uses various person-centered planning strategies (e.g. MAPS, IPS, Futures Planning).

III. PREPARATION/TRAINING STANDARD

1. Modifies/enhances curriculums.
2. Uses a variety of instructional strategies.
3. Delivers functional curriculum in the following areas:
    a. Independent Living
    b. Recreation/Leisure
    c. Academic
    d. Vocational
    e. Community Access
    f. Social/Interpersonal
4. Promotes family and student empowerment and self determination.

IV. COLLABORATION STANDARD

1. Develops contacts and working relationships with Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Developmental Disabilities Services, Mental Health Services, JTPA, Division of Youth Services, Community Collages, Higher Education, etc.
2. Knows in-school resources such as counselors, psychologists, occupational therapists, vocational instructors, nurses, social workers, physical therapists, speech and language specialists, School to Work personnel, etc.

V. LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT STANDARD

1. Develops and communicates a shared vision for educating students with special needs.
2. Monitors and evaluates effectiveness of program.
3. Supervises paraprofessional staff.

University Personnel Roles

As shown in Table 4 the role of the University personnel involved in this project shifted as a result of district personnel needs. Empowering educators involves a willingness to include people as equals and begins a process of growth for all involved (Smith, Edelen-Smith, & Stodden, 1996; Smith & Stodden, 1994). The university role in this project became one of assisting districts to arrive at a plan during regular networking meetings. It was during these meetings, as well as during technical assistance visits, that the university became aware of resources needed by districts to continue working to infuse transition information procedures into their programs. Technical assistance also allowed project staff to support educators and to reassure them of the value of their efforts. Evaluating and reflecting upon the project was also in the purview of university staff. As shown in Table 5, a formal evaluation was used to understand how the process was faring. But perhaps the most important role of the university was that of providing credibility to the efforts of participating educators to their administrators and peers as they changed their own roles to become more acquainted with the community and less involved in traditional classroom activities. This role of university staff was the same as that of the "critical friend" described by Smith, et. al (1996). University personnel met with school principals, assisted with writing brochures to advertise programs, and connected schools with the state departments of education or other state offices that could assist them. Being a critical friend meant that the university was collaborating with the district. As a consequence of this partnership, members of the university team realized the importance of gaining schools' administrative support, and began advocating at the university for changes in the administration licensing programs to include more information about special needs and the change process.

Table 4

University Roles

Facilitate Planning
- orchestrate team visioning
- guide action planning
- schedule network meetings

Provide Resources
- offer technical assistance
- deliver courses
- evaluate project

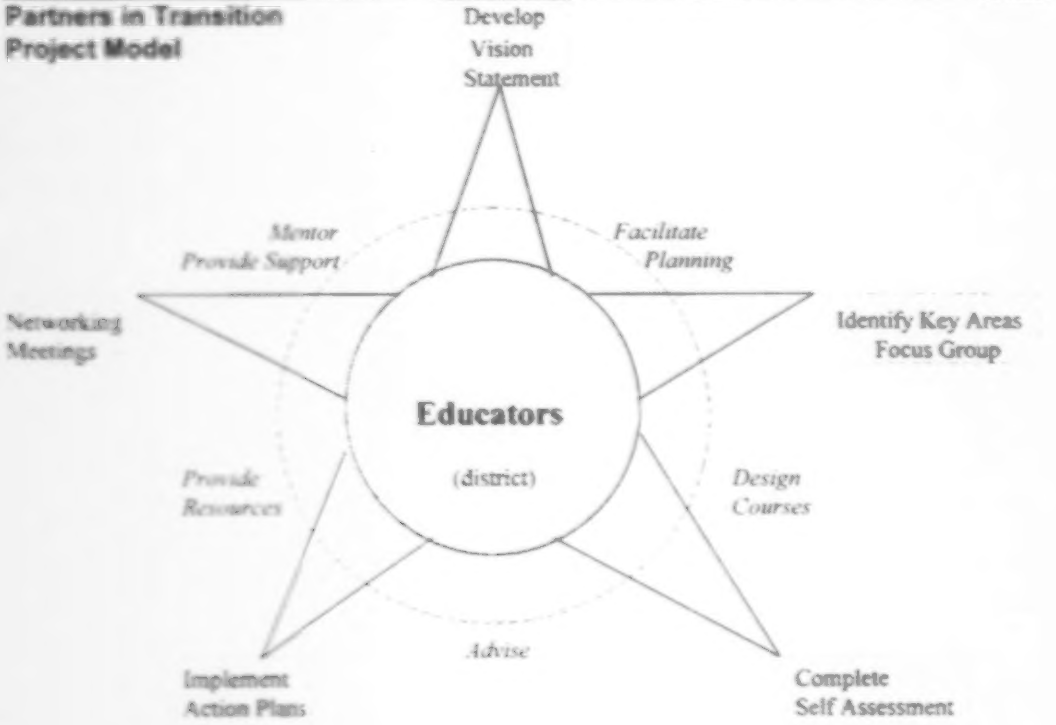
Maintain Support
- provide credibility to school administration/peers
- advocate for changes in preservice education
- collaborate in identifying a training agenda

The Partners in Transition Model

From this project a model has emerged for providing inservice and preservice training Although this model is not confined to rural districts, it represents decisions made to address rural concerns. The model was originated to understand rural needs and to address problems such as understanding the context in which transition is occurring in local areas and creating a relationship between schools not in close proximity to institutions of higher education. Thus, distance learning and condensed courses have become integrated into the Colorado State University course offerings. On a broader level, the model represents elements important to all types of programs effecting change (Fullan, 1993). See Figure 2.

Figure 2

Partners in Transition Project Model


Develop
Vision
Statement
Mentor
Provide Support
Facilitate
Planning
Networking
Meetings
Identify Key Areas
Focus Group
Educators
(district)
Provide
Resources
Design
Courses
Advise
Implement
Action Plans
Complete
Self Assessment

Key: shaded areas pertain to educators
unshaded middle circle pertain to university personnel

Table 5

PARTNERS IN TRANSITION

Evaluation Survey

Questions were developed in the following project related areas that allowed participants to reflect on their experiences.

1. Courses
2. Internships
3. Networking
4. Technical Assistance
5. Administrative Support
6. Team Configurations
7. Special Education and Occupational Therapy

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Evaluation

There have been many positive outcomes from this project. The development of a partnership between local districts and universities is powerful and a goal of most current education reform movements. Collaborating has enabled the program to understand the real issues prevalent in districts and local communities. It also pushes districts to look more globally for answers in finding ways to help their students receive a good education. But reflection over the past tree years has also shown this project staff weaknesses inherent in the model. These deficiencies can be attributed to university barriers, district-level barriers, and educator resistance. At the university, the short-term nature of the project was a problem; districts only received intense support during one year and then another district was recruited. Longer-term relationships would have increased the amount of change. Ideally, schools and universities could develop partnerships similar to those being promulgated in teacher Licensure programs, called professional development schools. This is more difficult at the graduate level (all courses offered during this project were graduate courses). Unfortunately, many of the activities such as technical assistance and network meetings were sponsored by the grant and not typical graduate program activities traditionally financed by universities.

In terms of the districts, clearly administrative support was an issue. In some districts even the special education administration was lacking in knowledge about the laws and mandates surrounding the area of transitional services. Therefore, they were not supportive of teachers teaching anything other than academics. In future projects, as recommended by Smith, et al. (1996), many constituents need to be involved in making public commitments to incorporating transition services. Project staff initially hoped occupational therapists would become key members on transition teams. But soon it became apparent that districts allotted OT time primarily to the elementary grades for "motor activities" and were not willing to reallocate some of this time to secondary programs. And finally, educators themselves posed resistance to necessary changes. Teachers often were unwilling to try a new strategy or forgive perceived slights remembered from years past in order to deliver transition services to students. They did not seem to want to be empower to make decisions. Some of these problems are surmountable but others reflect the reality of day-to- day operations that will probably always exist in local schools. Overall, however, this project succeeded in identifying and using strategies that foster the empowerment of educators wanting to improve their programs and the outcomes for students.

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Dr. H. H. Hooper, Jr.
Turner Community School District
Kansas City, Kansas
Dr. Anita M. Pankake
& Dr. Gwen Schroth
Department of Educational
Administration
Texas A & M University-Commerce
Commerce, Texas

CONCERNS OF RURAL SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN TEXAS REGARDING INCLUSION AS A METHOD FOR SERVING SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

In 1977, Drucker noted that, "our society has in this century become a society of organizations" (p. 27). Contemporary society pursues many, if not most, of its goals by establishing various organizations. These organizations vary markedly in size, complexity, and purpose. Many factors influence the degree of success these organizations experience (Bennis & Nanus, 1985), but chief among these influencing factors is organizational leadership.

According to Drunker (1977), "organizations depend on managers [leaders], are built by managers [leaders], directed and held together by managers [leaders], and are made to perform by managers [leaders] " (p. 27). More recently, Koontz, O'Donnell, and Weihrich (1986) wrote that leading is one of the most important human activities. They went on to report that "managers at all levels and in all kinds of enterprises have the basic tasks of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, can accomplish selected missions and objectives" (p. 3). In fact, Deal and Peterson (1990) conclude that nothing will happen without leadership. From their perspective, it is essential that, "From someone -- or someplace -- energy need to be created, released, channeled, or mobilized to get the ball rolling in the right direction" (p. 4).

Bennis and Nanus (1985) assert that a leader "is one who commits people to action, who converts followers into leaders, and who may convert leaders into agents of change" (p. 3). To accomplish this, Kouzes and Posner (1987) suggest, "if someone is to lead us, that person must be able to stand before us and confidently express an attractive image of the future, and we must be able to believe that he or she has the ability to take us there" (p. 25). Formulating a picture of the future (visioning), helping others see that future as both possible and probable (sharing the vision), and coordinating the resources and responses necessary to move toward realizing that future (providing support) are among the most important responsibilities of organizational leaders. Leadership then is the additional influence up and beyond routine guidelines and directives.

Most often the individual in the top leadership position of an organization is referred to as the chief executive officer, i.e., CEO. In public schools, the organizational leader is the superintendent and this individual serves as the board's executive officer (Blumberg, 1985). As the organizational leader, the school superintendent is obligated to provide direction to the board and others as they determine goals and objectives for the district. In doing this, Blumberg suggests that "superintendents are expected somehow not only to keep the organization running as smoothly as possible, but also to influence the character and substance of educational life in the systems in which they work" (p. 207). School superintendents then, as organizational leaders, are expected to behave in such a way that current operations go smoothly but also lead to a future that is purposefully different.

According to Wills and Peterson (1992), "the leadership role provided by the superintendent remains a critical linkage in translating educational reform legislation into change, improvement, or ample 'workshelf' compliance" (p. 141). Similarly, Usdan (1994) described the district superintendent and the local district as the linkpin of educational reform. He noted that superintendents are in a unique position to function in a proactive role in coordinating the many complex elements essential to wide spread educational improvement. "The educational leader, then, is in a position of shaping the organizational structure of the schools within the districts and the beliefs of the school community" (Thousand & Villa, 1990, p. 7).

Today's superintendents are faced with the ever increasing implications of responding to federal laws and civil rights court cases that have been initiated by state and federal governments (Hill, 1993). Superintendents realize that with the change of placing students with special needs in the regular classrooms will come resistance; the concerns of teachers, administrators and parents will have to be considered. According to Kelly (1974), "leadership is the performance of acts which assist the group in achieving certain ends" (p. 365). As the key leader in the school district in regard to the school's programs the superintendent's concerns can facilitate the nature of or discourage the school's personnel in achieving certain desired changes. In other words, the school superintendent's concerns influence the way those in the organization think, feel and behave toward change. Their concerns toward the impending changes involved in the inclusion of special needs children will probably influence the level of acceptance of others in his/her district.

As districts move toward serving special needs children in inclusive arrangements, knowing what concerns superintendents have allows the development of strategies for addressing them. Internal and external agents (ex., state department representatives, university preparation programs, consultants, intermediate units, special education cooperative representatives, etc.) can better serve district leaders if they know the kinds of concerns these leaders have. Gaining insight into rural school superintendents' concerns toward serving children with special needs in inclusive classrooms could help minimize problems in implementing this innovation at all levels of the organization. Given the less than stellar history of successful implementation of planned changes in education information regarding implementation processes is crucial if the future is to boast of a greater number of successes.

Knowing an individual's stage of concern regarding an innovation is important information. It can guide facilitators of change in selecting the type of information, development activities, or support to provide the individual that will move him/her through the stages and ultimately to the routine use of the innovation. The results of this study offer some interesting perspectives regarding the implementation of an innovation in rural schools and the role which the superintendent plays in the implementation process.

The overall objectives of this paper are: (1) to provide information regarding the results of a study identifying the concerns of rural school superintendents in Texas toward serving children with special needs in inclusive classroom arrangements, and (2) to discuss the implications of these findings for change facilitators at all levels of the educational community. An overview of the study including population, guiding questions and the methodology are presented. Major findings, conclusions and recommendations for practice make up the major portion of the presentation.

An Overview of the Study

The study focused on rural school districts and the concerns (as measured by the Change Facilitator's Stages of Concerns Questionnaire) of their chief executive officers regarding the innovation of inclusion as a method of serving students with special needs. The major purpose of the study was to identify the concerns of rural school superintendents toward inclusion. The population for the study was the 708 superintendents of rural school districts in Texas, i.e., those districts with average daily attendance of 1,600 or fewer students. A survey packet was mailed to each superintendent. It contained a cover letter, a survey instrument (i.e., the CFSoCQ), a demographic data sheet, and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope.

The instrument used was the Change Facilitator Stages of Concerns Questionnaire (CFSoCQ) (Hall, et al, 1991). Permission to use the CFSoCQ was secured from the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Austin, Texas. The CFSoCQ is based on the seven stages of concern identified through the work of Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall (1987). Hord, et al state that research has identified seven stages of concern that users, or potential users, of an innovation may have. These include: (a) Stage 0-Awareness Concerns, (b) Stage 1-Informational Concerns, (c) Stage 2-Personal Concerns, (d) Stage 3-Management Concerns, (e) Stage 4-Consequence Concerns, (f) Stage 5-Collaboration Concerns, and (g) Stage 6-Refocusing Concerns.

The CFSoCQ requires respondents to indicate what they think about a specific innovation by marking each of 35 items on a 0 to 7 Likert scale according to how accurately the items describe the respondent's current feeling about the innovation. The 35 items represent seven stages of concern, five items for each stage. Raw scores for each stage of concern are converted to percentile scores and arrayed on a stages of concern profile. A demographic data sheet asking respondents to indicate: district enrollment (under 500, 501-999, 1,000-1,600, and over 1,600), percent of total enrollment who are special needs children (0-5%, 6-10%, 11-15%, 16-20%, and more than 20%), and the status of inclusion by implementation stage (note implemented, in planning stages only, partially implemented, and fully implemented) was also developed.

An exceptionally good return of 484 questionnaires (68%) was received. Raw data generated by the usable CFSoCQ's and demographic data sheets were scored, entered on a disk according to the protocol and mailed to the research analyst at the University of Texas - Austin. Total group and subgroups based on demographic categories were profiled by a computer program which displays raw scores, corresponding percentile scores, and graphs the respondent data according to each of the seven stages of concern. The data were analyzed to determine the overall concerns of rural school superintendents toward inclusion and what differences in superintendents' concerns by enrollment categories, in terms of special needs children as a percent of the total district enrollment, and in terms of the status of program implementation.

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations for Practice.

Of the 482 respondents who completed the demographic section of the survey, nearly half (236, 49.0%) were from school districts with an enrollment under 500 students. Just under 30%(28.4%) were from districts with and enrollment of 501-999; 93 (19.3%) were from districts with an enrollment of 1,00-1,600; and slightly over 3% (16) were districts identified (by Texas Education Agency) previously as rural schools, i.e., 1,600 or less ADA. There were 481 respondents who completed the data section concerning special needs children as a percent of district enrollment. Slightly less than 60% (59.0%) were from districts with 6-10% or 11-15 % of special needs children as a percent of district enrollment. Just over 30% (31.6%) reported 16% or more special needs children as a percent of district enrollment. Finally, 481 respondents indicated the status of program (inclusion) implementation. When combining all three stages of implementation, 92.7% of the districts reported they were actively engaged with inclusion. The majority of the superintendents reported their districts as having inclusion partially implemented (60.9%). Only 7.3% reported "not implemented" as the status of inclusion in their districts and 28% reported the status of inclusion in their district as "fully implemented".

A summary analysis of data indicated that the overall superintendents expressed their greatest concerns at CFSoCQ Stages 0 (Awareness), 1 (Informational), 3 (Management), and 6 (Refocusing); less concern at Stage 2 (Personal), and much less concern at Stages 4 (Consequence) and 5 (Collaboration):

- Rural school superintendents as a total group (N=484) generated the following CFSoCQ Profile of Concerns regarding inclusion: Their most intense concerns were at Stage 0, moderately intense concerns at Stages 1, 3, and 6, less intense concerns at Stage 2 and few concerns at Stages 4 and 5. It is probable that the rural school superintendents gave little attention to inclusion but wanted to know more about the "how to do its" of implementation, were not concerned about working with others to facilitate its implementation, and were thinking about possible alternatives for it.

Importantly, the superintendents' concerns relative to their districts' status regarding the implementation of inclusion indicated some significant differences:

- Rural superintendents whose districts were at different stages of implementing inclusion (not implemented, planning for it or fully implemented) vary somewhat from the total group profile. Those in the planning category (N=18) wanted to know more about inclusion, the "how to do its" of implementation, and how to work with others effectively regarding its implementation. Those in the fully implemented category (N=135) were somewhat less interested in knowing more about inclusion, the "how to do its" of implementation, and were less concerned about alternatives to or replacements for it. Superintendents who reported their district to be not implemented (N= 293) were similar to the total group (N=484).

Considering both demographic and CFSoCQ data resulted in several conclusions. Among them were the following:

- School district size appeared to make no significant difference regarding the superintendents' concerns about inclusion.

- The proportion of special needs children in the total student population did not appear to make a significant difference regarding the superintendents' concerns about inclusion.

- The status of implementing inclusion appeared to generate significantly different kinds and intensities of concerns among superintendents.

According to the CFSoCQ developers, interpretation of the Stages of Concern Profile is limited to formulating hypotheses (Measuring Change Facilitator Stages of Concern, p. 43). Interpretation of the Stages of Concern Profile for all rural school superintendents (N=484) and the thirteen profiles of disaggregated data allowed the following hypotheses to be generated:

- Superintendents do not perceive themselves as facilitators regarding the implementation of inclusion.

- Superintendents see themselves playing significant role when the district is planning for the implementation of inclusion.

- Rural school superintendents appear to be meeting their leadership responsibilities regarding the implementation of inclusion. They are significantly involved during the discussion and planning stage and less so when implementation occurs. They maintain their oversight responsibility regarding the management function and keep their options open by considering alternatives to or replacements for inclusion.

Data from this study point to several actions that might be taken by rural school superintendents or others associated with this group:

- Many superintendents (135 of 484) reported their districts to have inclusion fully implemented. These individuals have likely learned some things that could be helpful to their peers who have not yet fully implemented this change. It would seem that these districts are a "rich" in-house resources as regards the implementation of inclusion. Several groups (Texas Educational Agency, Texas Association for School Boards, Texas Association of School Administrators, and others) should help these district disseminate their knowledge regarding the successful implementation of this change.

- Rural school superintendents should seriously consider using the materials available from the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Austin, Texas to determine the profile of concerns shared by administrators and teachers regarding the implementation of inclusion or any other substantive change in their districts.

and,

- In building support for and confidence in future implementation efforts, superintendents should consider developing a district profile of successful implementation processes. This profile could be one feature of the district's internal and community public relations program throughout the change process.

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Gretchen Butera, Lynn McMullen & Joan Henderson
West Virginia University
Morgantown, West Virginia

IEPS, STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS AND SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES: A COLLISION COURSE

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is the keystone of special education practice. As originally conceived of by the framers of P.L. 94-142, the IEP is to be developed via multidisciplinary team process with substantial parental and student input . IEP process should serve the purpose of developing long term goals and short term objectives that address specific student learning needs and direct instructional planning. The IEP is to guide placement decisions as well as specify evaluation processes and criteria. These critical functions of the IEP are pivotal in safeguarding students' rights to free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

Although the intent of IEP process involves creating highly personalized plans to meet individual need, there is little evidence that the implementation of IEP mandates has been successful (Baumgart, Filler, & Askvig, 1991; Butera, Belcastro, Friedland, Henderson, Jackson, Klein, McMullen & Wilson, 1996; Fiedler and Knight, 1986; Margolis & Truesdale, 1987; Smith & Simpson, 1989). Serious omissions of critical components in IEP plans, an overall lack of congruence among components of the IEP, and a dearth of parent participation in the process of IEP design have been documented by IEP research over the past decade. In addition, there is evidence that IEP process has become overly proceduralized as schools attempt to protect themselves from the lawsuits that often result when parents perceive IEP provisions are not met (Staples, 1996).

These issues become especially critical when we consider the IEP's presumed function of protecting the rights of students with disabilities to FAPE. In response to public perceptions about increased student violence and ongoing concerns about student safety, school discipline policies and procedures across the nation have become more prescriptive (Brendtro & Ness, 1995; Kauffman, 1995). In cases where students with disabilities are involved in discipline proceedings, the IEP is to be examined in order to establish a possible causal link between the misbehavior and disability. Our research data suggests that too often IEPs are not referenced in making these discipline decisions for students with disabilities.

Interviews of practitioners across the state of West Virginia examined their perceptions of IEP process as it actually occurs in the field. We were interested to find if IEPs were commonly employed to safeguard the rights of students with social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties. Additionally, we wished to investigate whether IEPs were perceived as workable plans for intervention regarding student needs.

Because the purpose of the research was to investigate practitioner attitudes and opinions about the effects of IEP mandates and procedures, a qualitative approach to data gathering and analysis was considered most appropriate. Doctoral students from West Virginia University conducted telephone interviews of 141 educators using protocols developed and tested for four educator roles: special education coordinators; principals; regular educators; and special educators. The sampling pool included practitioners from each of the 55 West Virginia counties. Interviewees in both classroom and administrative positions were selected from middle, junior and senior high schools using stratified random selection procedures. Elaborated responses were elicited using probing procedures and were recorded using note taking procedures described by Dillman (1978).

The initial stage of data reduction included compiling frequency counts of the interview responses that were forced-choice. A qualitative consensual analysis was conducted in which all members of the research team read the interview notes in their entirety to identify common themes. Examples of each theme from the interview data were placed in envelopes labeled according to theme. Reliability was established using a member checking procedure in which the content of envelopes was reread by various members of the research team. Disagreements regarding the content of any envelope were discussed until consensus was reached. This ongoing method of data reduction was pursued until most of the data was assigned to a categorical theme (Schumaker & McMillan, 1993). See Table.

Table 1
Interview Themes

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1. IEPs address academic rather than social, emotional or behavioral needs
2. IEPs too procedural, cumbersome, and time-consuming
3. IEP ownership solely that of the special educator
4. Differential treatment for "good students" v. "trouble makers"
5. Concern that IEPs were used to circumvent discipline procedures
6. Lack of practitioner training in behavior management
7. Frequent use of homebound instruction as an alternative special education placement

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Our results indicated that IEPs often address academic rather than social, emotional or behavioral needs, and the use of IEP process to guide discipline procedures was seen as too time-consuming and cumbersome to implement. These findings imply that students with social, emotional or behavioral disorders often do not receive instruction tailored to address their specific needs. Further, effective safeguards for their rights to FAPE via IEP process are not in place. Consequently, students with disabilities often receive the same instructional programming and discipline procedures as students who may have already mastered appropriate social, emotional, and behavioral skills. When schools suspend these students with disabilities for misbehavior, they remove them from environments in which they can learn and practice the skills they most need to develop including social skills and emotional/behavioral self-control.

A thorough and careful reconsideration of the role of IEPs in special education practice seems appropriate. On the face of it, we are loathe to abandon the IEP as a vehicle for safeguarding student rights. However, practitioners in the field are ultimately in the position to determine IEP efficacy as they use or fail to use the process as it was designed. The following specific issues frame the substance of our concerns.

1. Practitioners in the field of practice make decisions that ultimately determine the outcome of policy implementation. As Weatherley & Lipsky (1977) point out, teachers function as "street-level bureaucrats" when they must prioritize which of many pressing

needs to address in their day-to-day decision-making. It may be that in making these decisions, practitioners in essence reference an informal set of largely unexamined beliefs and theories about effective professional practice. For example, in our research, both regular and special educators frequently expressed a belief in equal punishment for all students regardless of disability status. They also felt that students with disabilities must experience equal treatment in order to learn what life was like in the "real world". These and other similar statements provide evidence that practitioners' understanding about the nature of disability or the effects of "punishment" is not especially well-considered. Under these circumstances, although both preservice and inservice training are important vehicles to bring about change, it is not clear to us what sorts of preservice or inservice training experiences are effective in changing the ways in which practitioners use IEPs to assist in decision-making about discipline for students with disabilities. It may be that practioner's beliefs about equity underlie the reasons why practitioners fail to use IEPs to guide practice. If so, continued training targeted only at skills in designing and implementing IEPs will not address the underlying reasons why practitioners fail to use IEPs to guide discipline decisions. This issue requires further research.

2. Our research suggests that the tasks involved in IEP process were viewed as primarily the responsibility of special educators. Principals frequently stated that they consulted with special educators to determine consequences for the behavior of students with disabilities. Particularly in rural settings which typically can provide fewer human service resources, such as mental health personnel and social workers, special educators may be called upon to address social, emotional, and behavioral issues with their students. Special educators, therefore, need to maintain an ongoing awareness of both the original intent of the IEP to safeguard students' rights to FAPE and their advocacy role for individuals with disabilities within their schools. Students, teachers, and educational systems may be well served if behavioral interventions and discipline procedures which incorporate proactive social skills instruction are designed during IEP process.

3. We hypothesize that issues related to social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students with disabilities become more salient as students advance in school. At the same time, as the school curriculum becomes more complex, it becomes even more difficult for special educators to effectively implement IEPs as students participate in inclusive classrooms with many different classrooms and classroom teachers. It is, therefore, essential that regular classroom teachers are informed of the behavioral interventions provided in IEPs and that they incorporate instruction in social skills within their classes. One high school special education department provides an extended coffee break early in the school year so that special and regular educators can confer about IEPs. As classroom teachers sip coffee and sample snacks, special educators give them copies of IEPs for students in their classes and schedule appointments as needed to jointly plan methods of implementing instructional modifications related to IEP goals and objectives. Such techniques appear promising for developing collaborative relationships between special and general educators. Such relationships are essential if student need is to be addressed.

4. Students and parents should be integral members of the IEP team. The varying demands of included settings during the volatile period of adolescents' progression toward adulthood also make it critical that students and parents are actively involved in designing proactive behavior management plans. During their middle school career, students with disabilities might be trained in strategies to communicate their educational expectations and goals. As they progress into junior high and high school levels, they should participate as full members of the IEP team as appropriate. Special educators might recruit active involvement of parents, before and early in the school year, by sending a letter describing expectations for the year and times that the teacher is available to address needs or concerns or by visiting the student's home. Although this may be a critical first step in involving

parents and studnets as active participants int he process, ongoing and extended efforts to maintain relationships that involve partnership are important.

5. Our research revealed that students with disabilities are frequently suspended from school often for relatively minor infractions. Interviewed educators often expressed regret about the lack of alternatives to suspension in their school. However, alternative methods of addressing student discipline usually involved placing responsibility for the student outside the school environment. We find this most distressing. Model programs that have demonstrated success with at-risk students have suggested that in order to address student needs schools must become creative, caring communities. Students must perceive that education is relevant their lives in the present as well as in the future. Opportunities for work study and vocational education as well as ongoing involvement in school and community activities. Connecting students with faculty members who maintain ongoing caring concern for their students is an effective method of keeping students in school and out of trouble. It is important to note that while some of these alternatives incur cost ultimately, they are cost effective since they are likely to keep students in school and prepare them for lives as full and productive citizens (Butera, et. al., 1996). In this regard it may be that special educators must assume an advocacy role in order to assure that schools adopt a proactive stance with regard to the needs of students who may otherwise be at-risk for school failure.

6. The use of IEPs as a safeguard for students rights to FAPE must be carefully monitored. Bateman (1994) points out and our data supports, that only the rare regular education administrator understands the educational or legal necessity for individualized disciplinary procedures for students whose disability relates their misconduct. Determining the relationship between disability and misbehavior is difficult. Failing to address this issue via examination of the IEP does not assure that student righs to FAPE are protected.

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Harvey Rude
University of Northern Colorado
Greeley, Colorado

Barbara Rudy
Public School System
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands

Jane Storms
Western Regional Resource Center
Eugene, Oregon

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROBLEMS IN PARADISE? LESSONS FROM THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Introduction and Rationale

At the request of the Public School System for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), through the support of the Western Regional Resource Center in Eugene, Oregon, a study of the current practices for the recruitment and retention of teachers was conducted. The concern for effective recruitment and retention processes has been outlined in previous efforts of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. The annual report compiled to comply with the data requirements of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, which is part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, has consistently documented the significant shortage of special education teachers and related service providers (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). Due to the inter-relatedness of special education and other teaching personnel, it was requested that a comprehensive approach to the issues of recruitment and retention of educational personnel in the Public School System be undertaken in the present study.

In conversations with technical assistance providers from the Western Regional Resource Center, a specific request to conduct this study was initiated. The official purpose which provided guidance for the activity was based on the need to: "...conduct a study identifying the current recruitment and retention patterns of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' Pubic School system and make recommendations to the special education coordinator to take to the Commissioner of Education regarding future efforts that would increase the retention rate." (Storms, 1993).

The efforts to recruit and retain qualified educators and special service providers to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands have been an ongoing concern of the administrative officers in the Public School System in recent years. A great deal of time and resources have been devoted to recruitment activities through visitation of college and university sponsored teacher recruitment fairs in the mainland United States. Other locales that have been targeted for recruitment in past years include the Philippines, Australia, Samoa, Canada, and Guam.

The need to identify current practices which may have an influence on the recruitment and retention of qualified staff members for the Public School System was identified as a high priority. Based on the analysis and evaluation of this information, it was the intent to develop a number of recommendations which would improve the recruitment and retention efforts for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Background Information

Through telephone conversations with representatives from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System and the Western Regional Resource Center, the parameters of the investigation were identified. It was determined that a variety of documents related to recruitment and retention practices would be available for review prior to conducting a site visit to the various islands in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. A list of artifacts was constructed and requested for review which included the following: all pertinent agency policies and procedures on recruitment and retention; current demographics on professional educators employed by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System; present or anticipated vacancy areas for educators; information on "Future Educators' Clubs;" strategic planning documents; personnel guidelines for professional educators including salary, benefits, and professional expectations; staff development programs sponsored by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; teacher evaluation processes; collaborative agreements and working relationships with local institutions of higher education; and, description of local community "welcome wagon" initiatives.

As these artifacts were being assembled, a review of current literature on recruitment and retention practices was assembled and forwarded to the office of the Commissioner of Education. The intent of sending these materials was to familiarize the Public School System staff members with the potential outcomes of a study on recruitment and retention.

Based on a review of the artifacts, conversations with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands special education coordinator, and conversations with the Western Regional Resource Center technical assistance liaison, a tentative schedule of visitations was developed. The schedule included requests to interview the Commissioner of Education and staff, Board of Education representatives, building principals, classroom teachers, special education teachers and related service providers, community representatives, and representatives from other pertinent agencies in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands such as Northern Marianas College.

Methodology

The information from the various documents provided by the Public School System yielded a variety of questions concerning present recruitment and retention practices among educational personnel in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. In addition, a series of questions related to staff development opportunities, support for professional enhancement, and cultural orientation practices were identified. A series of questions were developed into a survey instrument on the topical areas of recruitment, retention, and other concerns related to living and working in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

An itinerary of visitations was constructed which allowed for visitation of Public School System teachers and administrators on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota in late May of 1994. These three islands constitute the major population centers within the Commonwealth, and provide all school programs to children in grades K-12. As questions were posed to each individual being interviewed, a transcript of the responses obtained was electronically recorded. Transcripts of interview responses were developed and made available for analysis.

Following a review of the information obtained through the interview process, an analysis and summary of results was constructed through a qualitative approach of content analysis (Borg & Gall, 1989). The interview results, in combination with data obtained from the various artifacts, provided the basis for a series of recommendations to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System. The recommendations are intended for consideration by all staff members within the Public School System to improve existing policies and develop more effective procedures for the recruitment and retention of professional staff members within the organization.

Recommendations

Conclusions that are based on limited samples of information which is drawn from interview data and review of artifacts should be interpreted within the context of caution and objectivity. The objectivity results from the review by an impartial observer with limited knowledge of the complexities of the Public School System in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The caution which tempers this objectivity, specifically the difficulty in being able to obtain comprehensive information, provides the context for the following recommendations and discussion. The discussion of each recommendation is intended to provoke further dialogue concerning the feasibility and plausibility of each recommendation.

Recommendation One: The Public School System should consider the adoption of a streamlined recruitment process that enables recruiters to offer an "intent to employ" commitment or employment contract to applicants at the various sites from which they are recruited. The current process of sending recruiters from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to various teacher recruitment fairs in the mainland United States, Australia, Samoa, the Philippines, and other distant locations does not yield a substantial number of applicants. This may be due to the inability to provide firm commitments to prospective candidates until the recruiters have been able to carry home the interview and application information to principals and other hiring officials. To implement this recommendation with a high probability of success, it would be necessary for the responsible hiring official to develop a specific set of expectations for each vacancy including desired qualifications and experience, mandatory qualifications and experience, a detailed description of the position responsibilities, and any unusual expectations of the position. This would enable the recruiters to be effective and efficient in the use of their recruitment time.

Recommendation Two: The individuals within the Public School System who are responsible for hiring professional staff members should be routinely involved in the recruitment process on a rotating basis. The most effective approach to retention of professional staff members is to provide more opportunities for administrators who will have evaluation responsibility to take a direct role in the recruitment process. While it is not practical to expect that all building principals with position vacancies be involved in the recruitment process each year, it would be valuable to involve at least one building principal in each recruitment trip. The principal can be paired with an experienced recruiter from the central office staff to insure continuity and consistency in recruitment efforts.

Recommendation Three: The Public School System should consider adopting a structured interview approach to systematically determine the important themes to be addressed in the teacher screening and selection process, and the subsequent match between these themes and the prospective candidates. Several commercial organizations such as Selection Research Incorporated based in Lincoln, Nebraska, provide a number of structured interview approaches that can be adapted to meet the needs of the schools in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands with minimal disruption. The value of this approach is to develop a cadre of more discriminating and better prepared interviewers.

Recommendation Four: Recruitment information obtained on candidates should be more readily available to hiring officials, as well as the means to provide for more convenient contact between the hiring official and the prospective candidates. The current practice of videotaping the interviews of candidates is commendable. It would be more convenient to tape these interviews on VCR compatible equipment rather than utilizing beta tape equipment which has limited capacity for review by the staff members in the school system. While a beta compatible machine is presently available to staff members, there is limited availability of this equipment. If all tapes were produced on VCR compatible equipment, it would be possible for building principals and other hiring officials to review the interviews at home or in their school building without checking out equipment from the central office. In addition, it is recommended that each hiring official be provided with a long distance calling card number to enable them to contact prospective candidates without travelling to the central office building to place these calls. The sense of urgency involved in attracting the best possible candidates for vacant positions makes this investment a great value in the long term.

Recommendation Five: The Public School System should adopt a standard employment contract of 190 days rather than the present twelve month expectation for professional staff members. A large majority of the individuals who were interviewed pointed to problems that result from the current twelve month contract expectation on the part of the school system. From the review of documents and consultation with teachers and administrators, the need for contractual commitments from teachers and special service providers during the summer months when students are not in session was not evident. The necessary exceptions to this recommendation must be considered to include the extended year contact commitments to necessary personnel such as administrators and extended school year program staff.

Recommendation Six: A set of written procedures that describe the recruitment process should be developed by Public School System staff members. A number of useful recruitment procedures have been developed over the years by staff within the school system, but the potential to refine and further develop these efforts is hampered by a lack of systematic description and articulation of existing practice. An excellent example of a recent development in this area is the Recruitment Brochure that was prepared to provide realistic and accurate information to potential teacher recruits.

Recommendation Seven: To facilitate the recruitment and retention processes in the Public School System, the designation by position of one individual with overall responsibility for these functions should be considered. The present operation within the school system resembles "personnel action by committee" in many respects. There does not appear to be a central responsible administrator who is clearly identified as the personnel officer. It would be viable to consider appointing one individual from within the central office administrative staff to the responsibilities of Personnel Coordinator. This position could be charged with the coordinating role for all matters related to recruitment and retention. This consolidation of job targets in the area of personnel would assist in developing an articulated and clearly defined set of personnel practices.

Recommendation Eight: Provide a consistent salary model to all instructional staff members employed by the Public School System. The practice of providing housing allowances to off-island hires contributes to the difficulties in attracting potentially qualified natives to Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands position vacancies in education. Several native teachers and administrators who were interviewed as a part of the present investigation pointed out the inequities that have resulted from this practice. The intent of the school system to build capacity through the development of local teacher education candidates through the Teacher Corps program based at Marianas High School is commendable. By providing a single salary model without individual deviations for educators who are recruited from outside the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, it may possible to improve the overall competitiveness in salaries to all teachers in the system.

Recommendation Nine: The Teacher Corps concept should be extended downward to encompass grades nine and ten in the high school and potentially encourage students at the junior high school program to consider education as a future profession. Several individuals provided strong support for the efforts of the Teacher Corps in the effort to nurture an upcoming pipeline of potential future teachers. The value of extending the benefits of this effort to younger students in the Public School System is to provide awareness of the career potential in education to a much broader audience of students. In addition, it would be prudent to provide career awareness activities at a much earlier age to take advantage of promising students who would not readily consider the benefits of pursuing a career as a professional educator.

Recommendation Ten: The Public School System should consider developing a short videotape production which chronicles the environment, activities, and opportunities for employment within the organization in a realistic manner. A videotape production would serve as an invaluable recruitment tool for individuals to employ on their recruitment trips. In the event that the school system decides to contract the recruitment of teachers to outside agencies, such a production would be of great value to private vendors in securing a match between the personnel needs of the Public School System and the available talent seeking employment as an educator within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Recommendation Eleven: The Public School System should initiate a systematic, comprehensive, and coordinated program of staff development at the building level for all schools in the system. A variety of service and continuing education offerings are presently available to professional educators in the school system. The most notable of these is the certification program based on the local language and culture. It would be useful to consider the content of this program in light of identified needs for staff development that are assessed from educators in the various schools on Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. Expansion of the centrally offered and delivered certification program should be consistent with the aims and priorities identified by each school building through its professional staff.

Recommendation Twelve: A comprehensive program of induction support to all professional staff members within the Public School System should be initiated. One of the most effective strategies to facilitate the success of professional educators is to pair novices to an existing system with veteran educators who are available to provide mentor assistance and support for an extended period of time. The mentor concept was identified by some principals as available with the Public School System, but clearly not through a systematic and coordinated process. A worthwhile suggestion for effective mentoring of new hires is the creation of a three part mentor role program to include a lifelong resident of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands who is familiar with local cultural norms and expectations to serve in the role of cultural mentor, a master teacher to serve in the role of educational mentor, and the incoming novice teacher or apprentice. This triangulated mentor approach would ensure the sound transition of educators to a successful experience within the schools and local community.

Recommendation Thirteen: A formative system of teacher evaluation practices should be instituted at the building level for the purpose of improving instruction. The most widely mentioned teacher evaluation tool cited by professional staff members who were interviewed was the Marianas Instrument for the Observation of Teaching Activities (MIOTA). The degree to which the MIOTA was employed by supervisors was not consistent, and several evaluators spoke to the limitations of the instrument. The degree of employee satisfaction is frequently ;determined by the amount of support and encouragement provided by employers to improve their performance. Evaluation models which focus on peer coaching, performance based assessment, and other formative strategies for the improvement of teacher skills, knowledge and professional dispositions are critical to the retention of promising teacher recruits to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The key to implementation of these potential models is the ownership by building principals who see their responsibility as instructional leaders within the Public School System. It would be advisable to provide systematic evaluator training to all building principals within the school system to systematically support their role as instructional leaders and clinical supervisors.

Recommendation Fourteen: The salary model for all teachers within the Public School System should be evaluated for consistency and competitiveness to attract and retain quality teachers. A uniform salary model which is competitive for all teachers would potentially eliminate the need to offer housing allowances to off-island hires. Several native teachers spoke about the inequity posed by the current practice of providing a housing allowances to the off-island employees.

Recommendation Fifteen: The procedures governing retirement of teachers from the Public School System should be strengthened to include provisions that prohibit mid-year retirements. A calendar of retirement deadlines would insure a greater level of continuity in staffing from year to year. In addition, the retirement deadlines would ensure that positions do not become vacant in the middle of the school term. Several interviews pointed to the lack of understanding of the current retirement program to the extent that most teachers did not realize that they would receive retirement program to the extent that most teachers did not realize that they would receive retirement benefits once vested in the system. Many teachers believe they must leave the Public School System prior to becoming vested in the retirement system or forfeit the dollars that have been invested in the plan. Enhanced communication of the benefits to the individuals who become recipients of the school system's retirement program would potentially increase the retention rate of the teachers.

Recommendation Sixteen: The Public School System could consider providing outreach programs to the community, families, and other human service agencies concerning the specific recruitment and retention issues for professional staff members in the schools. The outreach programs should be constructed in the spirit of a dialogue between the school system and its constituents. The linkages that would result would enhance the understanding of the problem areas in recruiting and retaining qualified instructional staff, and enlist the support of the greater Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands community in supporting present efforts. Some potential topics for consideration include the issues of teacher orientation/induction, community education, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands culture, and systematic parent education.

Recommendation Seventeen: The diversity of the teaching force in the Public School System should be strengthened to more accurately reflect the diversity in the student population. The changing nature of the school population in recent years has produced a situation where upwards of thirty different cultural groups are represented in the students and families served by the Public School System. Every effort should be made to ensure that professional educators who work in the school system also reflect this diversity while maintaining a sensitivity to the majority culture of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The uniqueness of the various schools found on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota represents a major strength in the educational opportunities to students and families who benefit from their educational expertise. At the same time, the increasing demands of a global society will continue to place larger demands on the Public School System to employ a more broadly represented multicultural teaching force. The selection of qualified teachers and other educational professionals from a variety of countries and cultures can assist the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in meeting the challenges of recruiting and retaining an outstanding cadre of professional educators. Such professionals will demonstrate the skill, knowledge, and professional dispositions required to meet the challenges of quality education for all Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands students into the twenty-first century.

Summary

The difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified special educators are extremely difficult, even in paradise. While the island life style is initially attractive to prospective educators, the isolation and disconnection from mainstream culture are significant barriers to long term development of professional educators within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System. The issues of multicultural perspective pose an ongoing challenge for an educational system that is very remote and often isolated from different ideas across the Pacific rim.

The seventeen recommendations offered in this report provide a starting place for addressing the concerns of attracting and retaining the best qualified teachers and related service providers for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. On the national scene (U. S. Department of Education, 1995), the issues of supply and demand for special educators continues to be an issue of emergency proportions for virtually every state, territory, and commonwealth of the United States. Hodgekinson (1996) reported on the demographics associated with these issues at the Sixteenth Annual American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES) conference in Baltimore. Each state has identified the magnitude of this concern through the data reporting requirements of its Comprehensive System of Personnel Development requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). The value of this information is to provide a clear indication of concerns and potential strategies that address the challenges of providing teachers and related service professionals that meet the expectations for the provision of a quality educational experience to every learner. The issues of rural and remote locations should not be a significant barrier to achieving this goal if approached from the perspective of the total system. The viewpoint of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands serves as an example that can provide guidance for other rural and remote school systems with recruitment and retention concerns.

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Sandy Devlin, Ed.D &
Alison Brown, M.Ed.
Mississippi State University
Starkville, Mississippi

Meeting the Academic Needs of Gifted Students in Rural Settings

The full inclusion of gifted students into the general education classroom is a controversial topic in gifted education. While The Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1990 (IDEA) stipulates that children with disabilities must be provided a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (LRE) (McCarthy, 1994), there is no mention that such regulations apply to gifted and talented students (Culross, 1997). Consequently, gifted students who spend most or part of each day within the general education setting may not be receiving an education that is most "appropriate" for them.

Several researchers have conducted studies in an effort to determine the impact on general classroom placement of gifted students (Davis, 1990; Dettmer, 1993; Renzulli & Reis, 1991). Reis, Renzulli, and Westberg reported in 1994 that of the elementary school teachers they surveyed, 61% reported they had never had any training in teaching gifted students. They also found in a follow-up study that gifted students reported no instructional or curricular differentiation in 84% of the instructional activities in which they participated. Culross (1997) asserts that most cases of neglect of gifted students that occur in general classrooms are a result of ignorance and not a conscious intent to ignore the needs of the students.

Dettmer (1993) has suggested that what is needed is a reconceptualization of the general classroom to accommodate the learning needs of all students, including the gifted ones. Teachers must develop instructional practices that appropriately challenge gifted learners. Classroom practices that have been found to be successful in helping gifted students maximize their potential include activities that are open ended (Maker, 1995), utilization of a curriculum that is based on student interest (Hidi, 1990), curriculum compacting, and the use of learning centers (Renzulli, 1986). Several techniques for utilizing these practices will be discussed.

Learning Centers

Gifted students often finish activities before other students in a general classroom. Learning centers allow gifted students an opportunity for more depthful learning activities while the remainder of the class finishes the assignment. Learning centers involve teaching a specific topic, with activities selected from each level of Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, 1984) (see table 1). Gifted students benefit from participating in the learning centered activities but also from developing such activities. Topics to be considered for the learning centers should be based on student interests and should involve a variety of activities for each of the levels of learning as outlined by Bloom. Examples of activities for learning centers include, vocabulary words for each topic, specific reach activities, or puzzles and games. Leaning activities advance through the levels of learning (see table 2). Before students can begin working at a learning center, they must sign a contract (see table 3) stating that they will complete a certain number of activities at each level. Students are rewarded upon completion of the activities.

Curriculum Compacting

Gifted students are often bored with subjects where they have already been exposed to the material (Renzulli, 1988). Curriculum compacting is one way to eliminate such boredom from the classroom. Renzulli (1988) has described curriculum compacting as a way for gifted students to "buy back" school time that was planned for them to "spend" in one way, so they can "spend" it in another way. Student strengths represent the area of the curriculum that should be compacted. Once the strengths are identified, a pretest can be administered to determine what concepts have been mastered. Students who have mastered certain concepts should be excused from the activities involving those concepts. The free time earned can then be used to enrich the student's strengths or to allow for study into a particular topic of interest (see table 4).

Student Interest

Many teachers worry what students will plan to do with their free time bought through curriculum compacting. Gifted students usually have developed an interest or passion for a topic not necessarily in the curriculum (Winebrenner, 1992). The student's interest is a good place to begin for free time activities. Students sometimes have trouble choosing a topic to begin the investigation. Teachers can help the students choose a topic by giving them an interest survey (see table 5). This allows the student and teacher to find out what topics the student would enjoy. Interest surveys' have been found to motivate students through discussing their interests (Wlodkowski, 1986). Students also have trouble deciding what subtopics they want to investigate. Teachers can help students choose a subtopic by developing topic menus (see table 6). The menu would show several general subtopics under a category. Students could then choose the subtopic they want to learn more about. The topic menu may also help them to think of other subtopics that are not included. Students could bring the topics not included to the teachers attention (Winebrenner, 1992).

Conclusion

There has been very limited research concerning the effects of inclusive education of gifted learners. It is, however, generally accepted that gifted students need a differentiated curriculum to develop to their fullest potential. When gifted students are included in general education classrooms, teachers must individualize instruction to meet the needs of these students. Gifted students should not be expected to remain interested in concepts already mastered or complete extra work when finishing assignments early. Such assignments can lead to boredom and consequently the underachievement of the brightest in the classroom. This is why it is so important for general education teachers to individualize their instruction for gifted students. The techniques suggested, learning centers, curriculum compacting, and teaching through student interests, are only a few ways general education teachers can individualize gifted students instruction. These techniques will enable gifted students to maximize their potential by utilizing higher order thinking skills.

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Table 1

Bloom's Levels of Learning

Level 1	Knowledge -	students are able to recall or recite information.
Level 2	Comprehension -	students are able to retell information in their own words.
Level 3	Application -	students are able to apply learned knowledge from one setting to another.
Level 4	Analysis -	students are able to understand concepts and can study them in relation to other concepts.
Level 5	Evaluation -	students are able to judge what they have analyzed.
Level 6	Synthesis -	students are able to produce original ideas or products.

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Table 2

Learning Activities Related To Bloom's Levels of Learning

Level	Category	Words to Look for	Products
1	Knowledge	List, Define, Locate, Tell	Quiz, Exam, Vocabulary, Sharing Facts
2	Comprehension	Give examples, Summarize, Edit	Draw, Answer Questions, Diagram
3	Application	Build, Read maps, Follow recipes, Demonstrate	Artwork, Demonstrate, Model
4	Analysis	Compare, Contrast, Investigate	Survey, Plan, Report, Questionnaire
5	Evaluation	Critique, Evaluate, Recommend, Prioritize	Debate, Make decisions, Grade, Rate
6	Synthesis	Create, Invent, Imagine, Design, Compose	Poem, Invention, Song, Story

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Table 3

Contract for Students Utilizing Learning Centers

If you are working in the Learning Center while other students in the class are busy with other class assignments, you are expected to follow the rules listed below.

1. Stay on task at all times with learning center activities.

2. Refrain from talking to the teacher while he or she is teaching.

3. When you need help ask other students who are working in the learning centers before asking the teacher.

4. Remain as quiet as possible while working in the learning center.

5. If your learning center activity requires you to go in and out of the room, go as quietly as possible.

I agree to the rules described above. If I fail to follow the rule
I will lose the privilege of using the Learning Center.

Student Signature ___________________

Teacher Signature ___________________

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Table 4

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Curriculum Compacting Agreement</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Students Name:__________________</td><td>Subject Area:________________</td></tr>
<tr><td>Student Strength</td><td>Mastery</td><td>Alternative Activities</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Table 5

Interest Survey

1. What types of books do you check out when you go to the library?

2. What are your favorite magazines?

3. What are your favorite television programs?

4. What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

5. What is your favorite subject at school?

6. Do you collect anything?

7. What hobbies do you have?

8. What career are you interested in?

9. Is there anyone that you'd like to meet? Why would you like to meet them?

10. If you could invent something what would it be?

11. If you could visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

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Table 6

Topic Menu

Famous Americans		
1. Sports	2. Literature	3. Government
4. Actor or Actress	5. Musicians	6. Artist
7. Inventors	8. African Americans	9. Philosophers
10. Educators	11. Your idea for a subtopic can be written here ______________	12. Your idea for a subtopic can be written here ______________

1. What subtopics are you interested in learning more about?____________________

2. Is there a specific area of the subtopics that interest you?____________________

3. Is there any specific names of famous people that you have thought of that would be included with your subtopics?____________________

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Free Spirit Publishing Inc.

Nancy Harriman
University of Southern Maine
Gorham, ME

Mary W. Schmidt
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC

STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHING IN RURAL SCHOOLS

While the concept of inclusive teaching may appear to be more in concert with traditional practices of general and special educators in rural community schools than in some others, there are specific strategies for instruction, assessment, and collaboration that significantly enhance successful implementation of inclusive teaching in rural schools. This monograph will explain the rationale for those strategies and provide specific examples for use in teaching reading at the elementary level.

Inclusive Teaching: A Tradition in Rural Schools?

Meeting the diverse needs of all learners in rural classrooms is a challenge many general educators have assumed for years. In the two decades since the Education of all Handicapped Children Act was passed, the creation of a complex special education system probably did not relieve classroom teachers in rural schools of responsibilities for students with special needs to the extent it may have for teachers in larger suburban/urban schools. Why? One reason is chronic shortages of qualified specialty teachers (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1991). Regardless of the availability of funding from state or federal government and configuration of special education through which students with disabilities have been taught, rural schools have continued to report difficulty recruiting and retaining a quality cadre of fully credentialed special education teachers. This problem is accentuated in the case of specialty teachers for students with low incidence conditions, such as autism, sensory impariments, and multiple disabilities.

Further, because there are rarely enough students with intensive or highly specialized needs in a rural community to serve through full-fledged specialty programs, educators have either had to "make do" with a patchwork of adapted services in the community school, or out-of-district placement. Even regional programs for such students are difficult to coordinate and staff in many rural areas, and the current pressure to provide more services for all students in their home community schools may reduce the numbers of students to share costs and services even further.

However, some rural schools have been farsighted enough to develop flexible, family-centered community-based services for all or almost all students with special learning needs. Often relying on a combination of part-time support services and a high level of involvement by the classroom teachers, these programs take students from where they are and include them in general education activities in whatever ways they are able. Transdisciplinary teaming and a combination of direct and consultative services are cornerstones of these programs (York, Rainforth & Giangreco, 1990). For these schools the new challenge in inclusive teaching is helping all students meet new learning standards.

Principles of Inclusive Teaching

Given this history, what strategies do teachers in rural schools need to implement inclusive teaching successfully at the current time? How is inclusive schooling different from the one room school of lore in which students of all ages and abilities learned together under the tutelage of one teacher? First, inclusive schooling is a collaborative venture. Whether through remote access technologies, home visits, coteaching with specialists, or transdisciplinary team meetings, inclusive schooling is not a solo activity.

Second, inclusive schooling is for all students - even for those most at risk. The time has past when "a good days work for a good day's pay" doing manual labor is a viable alternative to schooling in rural communities. The dropout rate for students in rural communities remains more than twice the national average, and students who fail are more than twice as likely to drop out of school. This pattern must be interrupted by changing instruction and assessment to better meet the needs of learners who are not experiencing success or personal satisfaction from their schooling. Moreover, twice as many rural students with disabilities live in poverty - which is associated with many other risk factors such as educational attainment of parents, especially mothers, and teen pregnancy (Grossman, 1995). Breaking the pattern of illiteracy, poverty, and less success in school should be a major focus of inclusive teaching in rural schools.

The third way in which inclusive schooling today is different is the expectation that all students will meet national standards (Jervis & McDonald, 1996). The current national education goals are clear. All students will be ready to enter public school by age six and attain specified goals in literacy, mathematics, and science. The standards that are being set by states to attain these goals, as well as the assessments of the standards, will increasingly influence the content and type of instruction for all students.

How do rural schools support inclusive teaching? Most importantly, schools model "learning communities" in which educators, students, and parents value and support each other's learning and growth in constructive ways (Barth, 1990). Schools also support teachers in designing curricula, programs, and classrooms which are shaped to match the needs of students, rather than trying to reshape students to match programs (Gage & Falvey, 1995). In inclusive schools, educators:

- accept ownership and assume responsibility for *all* students in their community (Stainback, Stainback, & Ayres, 1996)

- approach teaching and learning as inquiry-driven, reflective, problem-solving processes (Schafer, 1967; Darling-Hammond, 1993)

- articulate goals and purposes, assess learner responses, and adjust teaching practices to maximize benefits for individual learners (Reschley, 1996)

- maintain the school as a living, adapting example of an organization which values diversity and collaboration (Pugach & Johnson, 1995).

Inclusive teaching requires more than a shift in philosophy and increase in collaboration, it requires a fundamental rethinking by general *and* special educators of what is taught, how it is taught, and how it is assessed for *all* students. To successfully implement changes in the general education curriculum so it will more adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities, teachers need support. However, teachers often have not been adequately prepared to employ these strategies in ways that meet the individual needs of students with disabilities (Schumm, Vaughn, Gordon & Rothlein, 1994). Leadership at the building level and beyond, ongoing technical assistance, and professional development activities on site, are all important sources of support for rural teachers implementing inclusive teaching strategies (Sebastian & McDonnell, 1995).

Implementing Inclusive Teaching

For the past several years the authors have been working with teachers in rural New Hampshire and North Carolina to develop more effective inclusive teaching strategies. At one elementary school in New Hampshire in the first year, classroom and special educators established a philosophy, definition, and goals for inclusive teaching within their school. During the second and third years, changes in roles, responsibilities, scheduling, and other aspects of service delivery were implemented and monitored. In the spring of the fourth year (1996) a professional development group was selected to study specific teaching strategies for collaborative teaching. The group consisted of four classroom teachers (Gr. T-1, Gr. 3, Gr. 4, Gr. 6), the two full-time special educators, the language therapist, the school counselor, and the first author as facilitator and met for five afternoon sessions. Technical assistance was provided through consultation throughout all phases.

In North Carolina at one elementary school fourth grade teachers have been working for the past five years on an adaptive science and social studies curriculum using a variety of hands-on teaching activities and cooperative learning. Students are all members of cooperative teams. The faculty meet regularly for planning and evaluation of their teaching strategies. College students also support the general educators and special educators who coteach these classes.

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The recommendations for implementing inclusive teaching strategies that follow are based on professional literature and experiences with these educators. While the teachers in both settings applied the strategies across the curriculum, an area of common concern at all grade levels was reading development. Reading is a complex process that many students with disabilities have difficulty mastering. Most traditional approaches to teaching reading to students with disabilities require extensive amounts of individualized instruction delivered on a one to one or small group basis outside the classroom. Often there were significant differences between the approaches used within the general education and special education settings. Thus, the teachers and special educators in our rural schools were particularly interested in strategies for inclusive teaching that would address students' needs in reading.

Teaching Reading Inclusively

How can educators ensure that the instructional needs of students with disabilities are met in inclusive reading programs? Controversy continues about which methods of teaching reading are most effective (Smith, 1992). Likely, there is no single "best" method for all students. Certainly traditional basal reading programs were not effective for all students, and while whole language has enriched classroom environments and enhanced appreciation for individual patterns of literacy, evidence suggests it is not effective for all students either, particularly some students with disabilities (Mather, 1992).

However, regardless of the curriculum or approach used there are certain elements that are essential to every reading program, including: reading as a communicative process; use of functional, meaningful reading materials; adequate redundancy and practice; a balance of direct and indirect instruction, and regular opportunities for sustained reading (Schmidt & Harriman, in press). These components are important and can be addressed through activities for all students. However, as the teacher determines how to integrate them into classroom activitites throughout each week, s/he also must consider the intensity of instruction that may be required and appropriate ways to monitor the progress of individual students.

What types of strategies help teachers integrate these elements effectively for students with special needs within general education classrooms? One survey of more than 50 teachers in three states indicated that cooperative learning and peer coaching are two types of strategies upon which teachers rely heavily (Harriman & Renew, 1994). Therefore specific learning strategies that can be taught to a whole class or instructional group and then implemented through a cooperative learning or partner learning setting appears to be one area of need. These types of strategies are compatible with inclusive teaching situations in which classroom teachers "sometimes but not always" have the assistance of other adults (paraprofessionals, special educators, volunteers, or related service providers), as is often the case in rural schools. Three of many strategies that can be implemented in this way are: question-answer relationships, team interviews, and propositions.

Question-Answer Relationships (QAR). QAR is a reading comprehension strategy for categorizing and responding to questions (Raphael, 1986). Through direct instruction with the teacher, students first learn to categorize questions as *textually explicit* (words in text are similar to words in question; answer may be all in one sentence), *textually implicit* (words in text may be different than words in question; information needed to answer may be spread throughout the text), and *scriptally implicit* (answer is not in text; information to answer has to come from reader's background knowledge). Then they practice formulating answers to the different categories of questions. A simple rubric with student-friendly categorical labels (ex. *in the book* or *in my head)* complemented by picture cues facilitates mastery of the categorization system by students with language or memory difficulties (Bos & Vaughn, 1994). As students become familiar with the categorization scheme they can take on the role of facilitator, querying and assisting each other in determining the type of question and an appropriate response.

Practice applying the strategy with a partner or small group can be an effective form of *indirect instruction* that motivates the student to use the strategy independently eventually. The verbal rehearsal of responses that takes place through this strategy is very useful to students later in completing assignments across the content areas, and provides *functional* modeling of sentence patterns and word usage. However, students with language or writing difficulties may need more support and guidance than their peers in applying it in other settings - especially initially. Consistent use of the same cue system and adequate amounts of guided practice can be facilitated by special education support staff or other trained classroom volunteers. This strategy is a good foundation for reading and responding to questions on performance-based assessments as well as traditional measures.

Team Interviews. Team interviews are just one of a set of interview formats that can be used in cooperative learning (Stone, 1995). An advantage of the team interview is the inherent balance in "voice-letting" and "voice-getting". For high risk students the team interview can provide a relatively safe, small group environment in which to practice expressing an opinion, responding to questions, and explaining a point. In team interview, the teacher provides a prompt or topic and a time frame for each interview (ex. 2-5 minutes). Within each cooperative group, each member has a turn being interviewed by the other team members. Depending on the prompt, the interviewee is often asked to make a few specific opening statements, then the group follows up with questions and discussion. To balance participation, roundrobin questioning is recommended.

Team interviews can provide an opportunity to rehearse the types of questions learned through QAR as well as selected social/communication skills included in the IEP's of students with disabilities. Students with moderate to severe disabilities may benefit more if an adult facilitator is available to monitor and provide feedback. They may also provide an alternative way for students to demonstrate achievement of some learning standards in literacy. Team interviews can be used in reading as a forum for book reports, character analysis, accessing prior knowledge (prereading/writing), writing revision, and book club discussions.

Reacting to Propositions. Propositions can be used to help students learn to differentiate between fact and opinion, to write a persuasive paragraph or essay, and to debate issues Johnson & Lovis (1990). All of these skills involve language processes, some level of inferential comprehension/abstract reasoning, and social awareness, areas that may pose difficulty for students with disabilities. In propositions, the teacher poses statements relevant to issues or concepts under study. (ex. The hero was wrong to break the law to save the victim...) Students must agree or disagree and support their position. Through a series of individual, and group research and response activities, students are taught strategies for recognizing different perspectives as well as defending a position. Learning to "argue both sides" of an issue and that the amount of support for a position is more important than personal loyalty or popularity in winning a debate pose authentic, highly motivational learning situations. Community members can be valuable resources for facilitating activities around topics in their area of expertise. Also, support staff such as school counselors can provide valuable support or follow-up with students regarding the personal interactions that take place during classroom activities. In small schools, whole school referenda and voting on issues provides functional preparation for the responsibilities of citizenship.

Collaborative Assessment and Inclusive Teaching

Frequent communication and coordination are crucial regardless of the strategies selected. For the greatest success, reading programs for learners with special needs :

- *build on strengths and interests* to maintain adequate effort,
- provide *frequent and sensitive feedback on progress* so the program can be finetuned monthly if adequate progress is not observed,
- include a balance of *remedial and compensatory strategies* so the student becomes increasingly skilled and independent,
- insure service providers and family members provide *consistent* or complementary *expectations, cues, and reinforcement*.

The importance of ongoing assessment cannot be understated, and must be perceived as a shared responsibility between general and special educators. If a teaching approach does not yield the desired results despite a sustained quality level of implementation of a strategy over time, then educators must be flexible enough to admit it is not working, and try another approach. "Blame" seldom contributes to solving these dilemmas, but attention to and support for making adjustments in the implementation of strategies is constructive and necessary. Learning together through inclusive teaching how to use strategies such as those recommended in this paper effectively can be a challenging yet renewing experience for general and special educators in rural schools. One way perceive it is as an opportunity to follow Allington's advice (1994, p. 18) and focus on "supporting versus sorting" students.

Conclusions

Public schools reflect the current values of their communities. However, they also have the responsibility to prepare students for the world of the future. Honoring both requires a shared purpose that is consistent with the mores of the community, yet accommodating of innovative teaching approaches, resources, and technologies. Particularly in rural schools, educators must convince an often tightly knit community that changes in practice are in the interest of students as well as the broader school community. With regard to inclusive schooling, values such as self-reliance and community interdependence are often familiar concepts that can be used as a basis for understanding contemporary thinking and practices (Berkeley & Bull, 1995). However, other underlying attitudes and assumptions counter to the notion of high expectations and full participation of all students may need to be faced and challenged in order to enable teachers to implement inclusive practices effectively.

Providing support for teachers through onsite professional development, technical assistance and consultation, and collaborative problem-solving and study groups are critical to the effective implementation of inclusive teaching strategies in reading and throughout the curriculum. Distance learning options may enhance accessibiity to such supports for many rural schools.

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Barbara L. Ludlow, Ed.D.
Michael C. Duff
West Virginia University
Morgantown, WV 26506

CREATING AND USING VIDEO SEGMENTS FOR RURAL TEACHER EDUCATION

Introduction

Video presentations of teaching episodes are acknowledged as important adjuncts to instruction in practical professions such as special education. Yet most faculty make little or no use of video materials in teacher education programs in special education. Although a wide range of commercial videtapes is available, many instructors are not aware of how to locate and utilize such materials in their courses or the materials they choose depict educational programs in urban and suburban areas with little direct applicability to rural schools. In addition, most colleges and universities have video production units, but instructors may not know how to collaborate with school personnel or technical staff to plan and produce original video segments. And, today's desktop video production technology makes the creation of original video materials well within the capabilities and finances of the typical instructor, but few of them know how to take advantage of these resources. Some simple guidelines can help all faculty members acquire the knowledge and skills needed for appropriate application of existing commercial materials, successful preparation of professionally produced materials, and effective and efficient purchasing and using a desktop video system for development of original video materials.

Rationale for Instructional Video

Video materials are ever more frequently used to support instruction in teacher education in special education. In recent years, instructors at many colleges and universities have turned to the use of video segments to portray for students the dimensions of the real world of the classroom (Goldman & Barron, 1990; Todd, 1993; Willis & Meblinger, 1996). Videotaped classroom scenes and teaching episodes have been recommended as one form of anchored instruction or situated learning, enabling student sto make the connection between theory and practice (Bransford et al., 1990; Brown, Collins & Druguid, 1989; CTG-VLTC, 1993; Lave & Wenger, 1991). The difficulty of providing field experiences to preservice students and classroom visits to inservice teachers makes the use of video to demonstrate programs and practices not only cost-effective, but even essential t developing the kind of knowledge and skills that special education personnel need to function well in their demanding and ever changing roles and provide high quality educational programming to students with special needs.

Computer-assisted instruction has been an important component of teacher education for over a decade (Cartwright, 1984; Blackhurst & Barron, 1990; Reith et al., 1993). More recently, use of multimedia modules for instruction has been found to be especially effective in promoting development of new clinical knowledge and skills through creating structures for situated learning of current best practices (Chen, 1993; Fitzgerald, Wilson, & Semrau, 1996; Overbaugh, 1994), as well as appropriate for providing learners with opportunities for reflection, problem solving, and practical application with feedback (Goldman & Barron, 1990; Lave & Weger, 1991; Reith et al., 1993). New authoring software programs, which enable program designers to incorporate text, graphics, and video with ease, have made the creation of modules a real possibility for the average instructor who is willing to take the time and effort to learn some new skills.

The last several years have seen a tremendous growth in the application of distance education models utilizing telecommunications technologies for personnel preparation in special education. Programs are now available in every section of the country as well as for all areas of specialization, primarily to prepare teachers for service in rural areas (Ludlow, 1995). Since most distance education programs rely on broadcast or pre-produced video of some type, appropriate use of visual presentation methods and materials is critical to successful delivery (Bates, 1987; Cyrs & Smith, 1990). As telecommunications-based distance education used to train both preservice and inservice special education personnel becomes more widespread in the years to come and as they compete with one another for student enrollments across the country, effective use of video materials will become a critical feature of programs that survive and flourish.

Video development is no longer the exclusive domain of the wealthy or the technically sophisticated. The recent revolution in desktop digital video and its incorporation into computer presentation software programs has made video production accessible to the average user (Sauer, 1996). The availability of inexpensive computer software and hardware has made the creation of original video materials integrated into multimedia applications tailored by the instructors for their own specific uses a new outlet for course development and scholarly productivity (Howes & Pettengill, 1993; Richards, Chignell, & Lacy, 1990; Wagner, 1996). Instructors who now use their computers via word processing and database programs primarily to design print or text-based materials, will soon find new uses for their desktop systems to create video materials for display in their classes via tape or disk formats.

Using Video Segments in Instruction

Videotape segments can be used in many ways to deliver and support instruction in the context of teacher education programs. The simplest and most straightforward use of video is to provide students with illustrations of basic concepts, demonstrations of specific skills, or examples of model programs and practices, through presentation of either real world situations or simulations. Video materials also can be used as contextually rich case studies to stimulate student discussion of issues and/or application of knowledge and skills.

Effective instructional use of video material requires consideration of the reason for using the segment as well as the desired learning outcome. Many instructors simply show the entire videotape, then continue to lecture on related topics, without providing learners with guidance in viewing the segment or in discussing its content. It is often better to show only portions of the video, either pausing the tape to explain or discuss content between sections, or playing only selected parts of the tape; this practice helps students to focus attention on the most important information. Supplying advance organizers assists students in understanding the instructor's purpose in showing the video and making sense of what they see. An especially useful technique is to provide learners with one or more questiosn to be answered while viewing the video, such as identifying or critiquing the behaviors observed, supplying the underlying theories or assumptions of demonstrated practices, or making recommendations for correction or improvement.

Locating Existing Video Resources

There are many excellent videotapes on topics relevant to education and special education already available commercially through publishing houses, production companies or educational agencies. Information about these resources may be obtained from publication catalogues, information clearinghouses, and advertisements in newsletters and journals of professional organizations. A number of national conferences held by professional organizations in special education and disability services regularly include video festivals, at which participants can view videotapes and obtain purchasing information. Some companies also allow for a free preview or offer tapes at minimal rental fees prior to purchase. Commercial videotapes vary greatly in price and quality. Those sold by publishers and producers are generally of higher quality and range in price from $100 to $500, while those available from educational agencies may cost anywhere from $10 to $100 for a tape of lower quality.

Once a commercial tape has been purchased by an individual faculty member or academic unit, it is available for unlimited use in face-to-face instruction. It is unclear at this point in time whether the purchase includes broadcast rights, so it is generally considered safer to request written permission to use the video material in a distance education program. Such requests should indicate the specific instructional use for the tape, the transmission mechanism, the time, location and audience for the broadcast. It is also helpful to outline steps that will be taken to protect the tape's security, such as prohibiting copying by others, restricting the number of snd access to copies, or superimposing a copyright warning. It also is wise to request permission if the video materials must be transferred to a different format, such as to another tape (for example, from VHS to 8mm for use in another tape player) or to optical disk storage (for use on computers).

Creating Original Video Materials

Colleges and universities with teacher education programs in special education that prepare teachers and related service personnel to work in rural areas need to use instructional materials that depict program models, methods, and materials that have been successful in rural schools. Yet, most of the videotape materials that are widely available represent program models from urban and suburban areas that may or may not be appropriate for or feasible in rural schools. This situation means that many faculty will see a need to create original video materials, by working with professional video production teams or utilizing desktop computers for their own video editing.

A critical step in creating original video production is securing permission for agencies or individuals for videotaping in home, classroom or community settings. Most educational agencies require an official written request to be approved by the chief administrator or governing board, followed by permission slips signed by parents or guardians or the individuals themselves before any video taping can begin. Most agencies will cooperate with a legitimate request to videotape their program if they are assured that the personnel involved will behave in a professional and responsible manner. Video personnel also need to make accommodations for those who do not agree to be videotaped, but who may be on site during the taping (such as children without pemission slips, accidental); this is easily arranged by locating them out of the camera's field of vision or sending them away from the area temporarily.

Another important step in creating original materials is preparing a script or outline to guide the videotaping sessions. The time, effort and expense associated with videotaping, especially in field locations and particularly where distance is involved, demands that advance planning to insure that all needed equipment and materials are available (microphones for interviews, lighting for dark locations, special lenses for cameras) and that all the desired footage is obtained (considerations in the daily schedule, availability of individuals for demonstrations or interviews). Careful planning is definitely essential when preparing to videotape a one-time-only situation that cannot be reproduced (a special school event such as graduation, an activity where a new skill cannot be unlearned) or when using a location that requires a considerable travel time and distance (such as a remote, isolated rural area, or an out-of-state agency).

Overseeing Professional Video Production

Most colleges and universities as well as state education agencies have their own video production facilities or are located in geographic areas with access to local companies or free-lance producers. If sufficient funds are available to use professional services, many instructors will prefer to have the assistance of trained and experienced personnel. A professional production team may include one or more specialists. Some will work during taping, such as a videographer to operate the camera and frame the shots, an audio engineer to locate microphones and monitor sound levels, a director to coordinate everyone's efforts, and a producer and/or production assistant to see that all needed supplies are on hand and to keep everyone on schedule. Others will work before or after taping, including a scriptwriter to plan the video components and draft any narrative sections, a voiceover artist to read the narration for taping, and an editor to combine video, audio and text segments into the finished production. In small production facilities, one or two individuals may share all these responsibilitie to keep production costs within reason. Working with a professional production team requires a discussion of content, roles, and budget issues. The instructor should prepare a comprehensive outline of the desired video materialso that the producer can estimate costs, prepare a timeline of activities, and determine the personnel needed. A written contract outlining activities, responsibilities, and due dates will promote a smooth working relationship and a mutually satisfying final product.

Using Desktop Computers for Video Production

Effective video materials for instructional uses are easily created using today's desktop computers. The first consideration is determining the platform to be used; although Apple's Power Macintosh computers are the best choice for video and multimedia production because of their ease of use, other platforms can be used. The computer to be used for video production needs to have good speed and memory to manipulate large files. The computer also must be equipped with a video input board to transfer video footage from a camera to the computer's storage; a board comes with some platforms, but will need to be installed in others. It is generally helpful to have access to external storage devices, such as an external drive that uses 100 megabyte disks or 1 gigabyte disks, to store raw footage, editing in process, and finished products.

The camera that is used to capture the original video footage is a critical component of high quality desktop video materials. Although broadcast and professional/industrial cameras provide the best footage for digitizing and editing, their prices are generally beyond the budgets of mist individual faculty and academic units. Consumer video equipment, on the other hand, is inexpensive and readily available, but cannot produce satisfactory image quality for desktop production. The best choice will be prosumer cameras, either S-VHS or Hi8mm formats, or the new digitalcameras by Sony and Panasonic, which offer a balance between reasonable cost and good quality. One or two portable lights are absolutely necessary to insure sufficient light to capture a good image. A tripod with a fluid motion head will support the camera during use, and a stabilizer can help the operator smoothly follow moving people or objects. Many books are available on videotaping techniques, which discuss positioning people and objects, framing shots and lighting scenes. Other references discuss important steps in editing video.

Many software programs are now available for editing video on desktop computers. One of the easiest applications for beginners is Adobe Premiere, which is bundled with many video boards. More advanced users may want to try applications that produce special effects, such as layering and compositing of moving images, morphing of one image into another, or three dimensional ritation of images. Most instructors will need training on use of these programs as well as support from a technology specialist during development. Books on editing stress clartity, simplicity, and impact. Clarity is maintained by the use of footage that tells the story in sequence from a wide shot to establish the context or setting to a medium shot to focus attention on the main event, and finally to a close shot to zero in on the critical features. Simplicity is best achieved by selecting the shots that best tell the story and by keeping effects to a minimum. Impact can be heightened by selecting footage that conveys content powerfully, portraying both image and mood.

The format in which the video segment will be used will determine the equipment needed for the final production activities. Video to be printed to tape will require a video output board and tape deck. Component video boards, such as the Media 100 qx, provide a better finished tape (especially if a bhigh quality camera was used initially and the tape will be used for broadcast), but less expensive composite video boards print tapes of adequate quality for most instructional uses. The choice of deck will be determined by the tape format desired, such as VHS, S-VHS, 8mm or Hi8mm, Beta UVW or SP or digital, but more expensive professional recorders make a better tape than consumer equipment. Video which will be used on some computer disk format, such as CD-ROM or optical disk cartridge, may be copied directly as a Quicktime movie or incorporated in to either a presentation program (Microsoft Powerpoint, Adobe Persuasion, Gold Disk's Astound, among others) or an authoring program (such as Macromedia's Authorware or Director).

Conclusion

Video materials, whether commercially distributed, professionally produced, or originally developed by the instructor, represent an important instructional resource for teacher education programs in special education. Video segments, displayed via tape during a face-to-face class session, broadcast during a live transmission to many distant sites, or available for individual student interactions via multimedia computer modules, enable prospective special educators to observe and study many important aspects of professional practice without the time and expense of travelling to and spending time in actual classrooms out during field experiences. Such segments also allow practicing special education personnel to review state-of-the-art practices that may not be currently in operation in their own programs or agencies and can serve as real-life models for the adoption of these innovations. Special education is a field in which the use of video materials is especially critical to fostering understanding and promoting best practice at the preservice or inservice levels. Instructors who are committed to providing the best possible teacher education program for special educators will make frequent and appropriate use of the wide range of commercial video materials available from publishing companies, production houses, and educational agencies. They also will explore and utilize when necessary the assistance of the professional video production personnel to them available through their own institutions, other agencies, or local businesses to plan and produce original video segments to supplement existing materials. And, they will learn to make their own video segments using inexpensive and easy-to-use comsumer camcorders and desktop computer editing systems whenevr they meed materials that are unique to a parcticular topic or philosophy or perhaps specific to a particular agency or area. Using these three strategies, any individual faculty member or academic program usint can acquire sufficient, effective, and appropriate video segements to support a teacher education program in special education, whatever their needs, their talents, or their budget.

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Appendix A
Resources for Commercial Video Purchases

Young Adult Institute
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
212-563-7474

Monaco & Associates
531 NE 35th
Topeka, KS 66617
800-798-1369

Paul H. Brookes
PO Box 10624
Baltimore, MD 21285-0624
800-638-3775

Research Press
PO Box 9177
Champaign, IL 61826
800-519-2707

Institute for Study of DD
Indiana University UAP
2853 East 10th Street
Bloomington, IN 47408-2601
812-855-6508

Disability Resources Catalog
Program Development Associates
5620 Business Avenue, Suite B
Cicero, NY 13039
800-543-2119

Institute on Disability
University of New Hampshire
Durham, NH 03824
603-862-0550

Public Service Project
23890 Middlebelt Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48336
810-478-9451

American Foundation for the Blind
13 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011
212-620-2000

Infant Hearing Resources
Portland Center for Hearing & Speech
3515 SW Veterans Hospital Road
Portland, OR 97201
503-228-6479

Films for the Humanities & Sciences
PO Box 2053
Princeton, NJ 08543-2053
800-257-5126

Insight Media
2162 Broadway
New York, NY 10024-6620
212-721-6316

Nat. Ass. for Educ of Yng Children NAEYC
1509 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-1426
800-424-2460

Child Development Media
5632 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 286
Van Nuys, CA 91401
800-405-8942

Fanlight Productions
47 Halifax Street
Boston, MA 02130
800-937-4113

Learner Managed Designs, Inc.
PO Box 747
Lawrence, KS 66044
913-842-9088

Educational Productions
7412 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Highway
Portland, OR 97225
800-950-4949

PBS Video
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA 22314-1698
703-739-5380

Therapy Skill Builders
PO Box 42050
Tucson, AZ 85733
602-323-7500

T.E.R.I., Inc.
3225 Roymar Road
Oceanside, CA 92054
619-721-1706

Appendix C
Resources for Video Production

Catalogs of Books about Multimedia Development

Ventana Press
PO Box 13964
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-3964
919-544-9404

Peachpit Press
2414 Sixth Street
Berkeley, CA 94710
800-283-9444

Macmillan Computer Publishing
201 W 103rd Street
Indianapolis, IN 46290
800-428-5331

Osbourne/McGraw-Hill

Berkeley, CA 00000
800-227-0900

Catalogs of Books about Graphics Design

Visual Horizons
180 Metro Park
Rochester, NY 14623-2666
800-424-1011

Catalogs of Books about Video Production

Knowledge Industry Publications
701 Westchester Avenue
White Plains, NY 10604
800-800-5474

Wadsworth Publishing

Belmont, CA 94001
000-

Association for Education Communications and Technology
1025 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20005
202-347-7834

Michael Wiese Productions
11288 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 821
Studio City, CA 91604
800-379-8808

Magazines and Journals

Presentations: Technologies and Techniques for Effective Communication, Lakewood Publications, 50 South Ninth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55402-9973

Videography: The Magazine of Professional Video Production, Technology, and Applications, Creative Data Center, 650 S. Clark Street, Chicago, Il 60605-9705

A V Video: Production and Presentation Technology, Montage Publications, 701 Westchester Avenue, White Plains, NY 10604

Joan P. Sebastian
Loxi Jo Calmes
John C. Mayhew, Jr.
Department of Special Education
221 Milton Bennion Hall
University of Utah
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

DISTANCE LEARNERS TALK BACK: RURAL SPECIAL EDUCATORS EVALUATE THEIR TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM

Introduction

The unique challenges of serving students with disabilities in rural settings have been reported in the special education literature for over a decade. Transportation issues, distances between schools, cultural differences, "boom and bust" cycles, inadequate housing, access to personnel development opportunities, and recruitment and retention of qualified staff are some of these challenges. One issue in particular, the critical need for qualified personnel, has direct impact on the delivery of services for rural students with disabilities and continues to be a serious problem for rural school administrators (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1991; Helge, 1981, 1984; Lemke, 1995; Ludlow, 1985; Marrs, 1984).

Access to specialized preparation and socialization into school and community life are two issues which impact the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel in rural schools. Individuals in rural communities who would like to become certified in special education often do not have access to university and college training programs because of long distances, topography, and weather conditions. The socialization of new teachers includes not only introducing them to the policies and procedures of the school, but to the culture of the entire community. Educators who are not fully socialized into a rural community are likely to leave. However, recent research suggests that individuals who are already part of a rural community and who receive their preparation in the community tend to remain (Lemke, 1995). Recognizing the importance of socialization to retention issues as well as the critical need for access to preparation programs, rural school districts in cooperation with university preparation programs have developed a variety of distance delivery approaches designed to recruit and prepare special educators (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1991; Ludlow & Wienke, 1992; Sebastian, 1995).

This paper presents the findings of a study designed to evaluate a distance teacher education program which was developed to address the recruitment and retention issues described above by providing special education teacher preparation at several rural sites throughout the state of Utah. Participants in the program were recruited directly from these rural districts and communities. The program was delivered via an "integrated" approach which combines interactive telecommunications technology, prerecorded videotaped courses, along with on-site instruction and supervision (Egan, Sebastian, Welch, & Page, 1991). The study examined participants' perceptions of program content and delivery as well as gathering basic information about teacher retention over an eight year period of time.

Method

Survey Instrument

A four-part survey was designed to evaluate the University of Utah's graduate-level distance education program in special education. Part I of the survey asked for demographic information and experience working in rural settings. Part II consisted of 22 Likert-type questions and two open-ended questions pertaining to the respondent's perception of the distance education teacher preparation program. The Likert-type questions utilized a six-point scale (6 = "strongly agree" to 1 = "strongly disagree"). Items in Part II focused on six main areas including: (a) assessment/evaluation, (b) curriculum and instruction, (c) behavior management and social skills, (d) collaboration and communication, (e) legal issues/professionalism, and (f) field experiences/student teaching. Part III of the survey asked respondents to rate the effectiveness of the different distance delivery approaches (e.g., live interactive television, videotaped classes, etc). Part IV of the survey consisted of an open-ended question asking respondents to identify the most critical challenges facing rural special education today. The survey instrument was piloted and underwent an expert review prior to mailing. The survey was mailed during the first week of May, 1996. Approximately two weeks later follow-up telephone calls were made to encourage subjects to complete and return the surveys.

Subjects and Data Analysis

Individuals who had completed the University of Utah's Master of Education and/or certification program in special education through distance education between 1988 to 1996 participated in the study. A total of 54 usable surveys were returned out of 92 that were mailed (59% response rate). Demographic information obtained from Part I was summarized and is presented below. Data analysis for Part II of the survey included calculating the mean and standard deviations for each of the six program areas (e.g., assessment/evaluation). Individual item means and standard deviations were also calculated and written comments were tabulated. Data analysis for Part III included calculation of the mean and standard deviation for each delivery approach. Responses to Part IV were reviewed, categorized and tabulated.

Results

Part I of the survey asked respondents to provide information about themselves and their current employment context (see Table 1). The average age for the educators responding to this survey was 45 years. All but three of the 54 respondents were currently employed in the field of education. Of those, most were in special education teaching positions. Other positions identified by respondents included general education teachers, administrators, and other specialists. All respondents had remained in rural settings since completion of the program.

Table 1.
Subject Profile

Gender:	Frequency	Percent
Female	47	87
Male	7	13

Age	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
	44.8	45	42 & 45	29-75

Professional Status

Currently employed in education? Yes = 51 No = 3

In what setting? Public = 48 Private = 1 No response = 2
Preschool = 2 Elem. = 21 Secondary = 17 Both = 3
Other = 12

In what capacity? Resource room = 19 Self-contained = 8 Both = 3
Administration = 9 Related service = 3 Gen. Ed. = 8
Consultant = 1

How long in this capacity? Mean = 7.32 years; range = 1 to 18 years

University special education programs in which you were enrolled?

Certification only = 9 Masters = 20 Certification w/Masters = 22

Area: Mild/moderate = 34 Severe = 10 Other = 8

Number of years worked in a rural district after completing university program?

Mean = 5.93 years; range = 1 to 17 years

Prior to completion did you work in special education under a letter of authorization?

Yes = 28 (Mean number of years = 2.82) No = 24

Part II of the survey assessed the six main areas of the program. On a scale of 1 to 6, the overall mean of all six areas was 5.05 (see Table 2). Individual program area means clustered around a mean of 5 or greater with the exception of the area of collaboration/communication skills (4.74). This particular area represents a recently added component to the teacher preparation program. When asked to identify program components that were the most valuable the top three responses were: (a) behavior management skills, (b) information on legal issues in special education, and (c) on-the-job-training. In response to this question individuals also identified as valuable the on-site support from university program staff and the opportunity to access a preparation program in their local community. Respondents provided several suggestions for improving the program. Suggestions included providing more access and contact with campus faculty, more live interaction using the telecommunications technology, and increased technical quality of video tapes and course materials.

Table 2.
Evaluation of Program Components, Means and Standard Deviations

(6-point scale, 6= favorable response)

Component	Mean	Std. Dev.
Assessment and evaluation	5.04	.89
Curriculum and instruction	5.01	.86
Behavior management and social skills	5.14	.77
Collaboration and communication skills	4.74	.90
Legal issues and professionalism	5.34	.74
Field experiences and student teaching	5.22	1.02
Overall rating of the program	5.05	.89

Part III had the respondents identify the effectiveness (on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being very effective) of different delivery approaches used during their program (see Table 3). Respondents indicated a preference for live on-site instruction, with video tape courses supported by an on-site facilitator as their next preferred delivery mode. Respondents' least preferred delivery approach was video taped courses without the support of an on-site facilitator.

Table 3.
Evaluation of Distance Delivery Approaches

(4-point scale; 1= Not Effective, 4= Very Effective)

Delivery system	Mean	Std. Dev.
Interactive television	3.15	.83
On-site instruction	3.80	.45
Videotape with on-site facilitator	3.41	.64
Videotape without on-site facilitator	2.47	.93
Videotape with interactive television	3.04	.65

Finally, in Part IV respondents were asked to identify what they see as the "most critical challenges confronting rural special education today". Financial support for local special education programs was the most frequently mentioned concern. The next concern most frequently identified related to educating students with more severe and complex needs in rural school districts. Additional challenges mentioned were the "inclusion" of students with disabilities and lack of support services for the more severely involved students. Other responses reflected site specific issues related to the local educational environment.

Discussion

Providing teacher preparation programs in rural communities to individuals recruited from within those communities seems to address both the recruitment and retention problems identified in the literature. Based upon the respondents' ratings the special education program offered at a distance by the University of Utah appears to meet the preparation needs of these rural special educators. Respondents provided insight into the effectiveness of a variety of distance delivery approaches and areas for technical improvement. It was also clear from the respondents' comments that frequent and face-to-face contact with university faculty is important for program participant satisfaction. Several of the critical challenges confronting rural special education reported by respondents have not changed over the years (i.e., finance). It was interesting to note that an overwhelming majority of the responses to this question were specific to the local context.

Note: If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the survey instrument that was used in this study, please contact the authors.

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John C. Hyde, Ph.D.
Margaret L. Drake, Ph.D.
The University of Mississippi Medical Center
Jackson, MS 39216-4505

Rural therapists assessment of capability for autonomous practice

Introduction: As a major place of employment for occupational therapists within a rural community, school systems seem to present the therapist with a foreign and often times bureaucratic organizational form. Since the caregiver is virtually trained and only exposed to the medical model of OT, the transition to an educationally-based care model is difficult and fraught with professional hazards. Coupled with the need to develop and many times self-develop complementary skills, the rural therapist is placed in a professionally compromising situation. As a corollary benefit, this research will hopefully provide insights into the need for potential curriculum revisions aimed at addressing these perceived educational shortcomings. As the health care delivery system is altered by managed care and other pressures, educators must respond to these changes and prepare future practitioners to face these altered practice models.

Previous research has identified that the concept of special education skilling from the perspective of the occupational therapist is problematic and limited in discovery. The perceived roles of the rural therapist employed within a school environment have been described as a jack-of-all-trades, bridge spanner between available community services, and the consummate professional loner or "…the world can get a little lonely out here" (Wills & Case-Smith, 1996). The issue of school site practice presents dilemmas associated with the environment and health care provider interface (Clark & Miller, 1996; Kellegrew & Allen, 1996).

Background: Because Mississippi is a rural state with only four areas that qualify as urban, occupational therapists prepared by our university need to be adequately prepared for the rural work environment. Presently, up to one half of our graduates locate within a rural practice setting. Since it was felt that additional insights could be gained from the inclusion of other rural states, Alabama and Louisiana were selected to be part of this survey. Given the predominately rural nature of these states, no bias would be introduced by their inclusion and more importantly a larger more diverse cohort could be tested. A recent article by Wills and Case-Smith (1996) identified five themes that categorized the types of practice among OT's in rural school systems: 1) jack-of-all-trades; 2) bridging the span between services; 3) the world can get lonely out there; 4) trust and teaming; and, 5) I cannot do it all, but I wish I could. This article goes further to explaining various coping strategies and related negative job outcomes such as dissatisfaction and intentions to leave. While this research is important in our understanding of the stresses faced by rural school system OT's, it was conducted on a qualitative, interview basis with only six therapists. Further inquiry is indicated based on the preliminary nature of this research and to more fully quantify its importance.

Existing knowledge concerning perceptions among rural therapists is limited. From a review of the occupational therapy literature, it is evident that little has been determined in this line of inquiry. In a study by Kanny and Crowe (1991), it was demonstrated that rural therapists reported a higher level of perceived unpreparedness than their urban counterparts. Or, rural therapists felt more unprepared to face the isolationism and lack of peer assistance prevalent in the rural environment. Dunn, Hughes and Gray (1990) found rural therapists were not adequately prepared to deal with problem complexities associated with rural school practice. They felt that additional pre-service training geared towards this rural environment must be incorporated into the on-campus education phase. This should additionally be supplemented with more rural service practicuums. Issues of personal adjustments to the rural practice setting have been identified as selection limiting constraints in terms of limited social and professional outlets (Bracciano, 1986; Welch, McKenna & Bock, 1992).

The organizational behavior literature suggests that the rurally-based OT will be faced with various professional and personal boundaries that adds a level of stress to their life. According to Friedman and Podolny (1992), professional boundary spanning activities suggests an inherent role conflict that stresses the caregiver and manifests itself by increasing intentions to leave the organization. Additionally, this study and others (Steadman, 1992) found that job satisfaction level are negatively influenced by boundary spanning activities that increase role and job conflicts.

Schwab, Ungson and Brown (1985) found that the effect of the environment is a confounding variable in boundary spanning. Organizations that are bureaucratic in design, contain multiple levels of hierarchy, and are governmental in control compound the effects of professional boundary spanning. Boundary spanners in this environment perceive the tenuousness of their role and experience negative career signals. This line of inquiry was replicated by Jerrell (1986). In a work by Brass (1984), the need for contacts beyond the normal work requirements influenced the individual from both inter-organizational and intra-organizational perspectives. Those individuals that are less able to successfully span these boundaries are more likely to experience stresses that lead to negative organizational consequence--lowered job satisfaction and greater intentions to leave their place of employment.

This findings become part of the basis for our study. The major gap in our understanding of this "rural practice uneasiness" appears to rest in an area that has not been explored within a combined research design--boundary spanning within a rural-based occupational therapy work environment. The addition of organizational behavior theories attempting to explain the dilemmas faced by OT's becomes the focus of the current study. It becomes apparent that these practice dilemmas are significant in terms of practice within a rural school system. As a larger proportion of our graduates find themselves employed within rural areas, these professional dilemmas will become more pronounced and commonplace. In addition to personal dilemmas among OT's caused by boundary stresses, funding constraints and more emphasis directed towards multiskilling educational models will only increase the need to explore this line of research.

Research Design/Methods: This research has utilized both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Since the existing theory is not fully established, the utilization of qualitative research techniques is an excellent choice to enhance our understanding of this concept.

Initially, six structured focus interviews were conducted qualitatively to provide a pilot study and to quasi-validate our intentions. Based upon these findings, the final survey questionnaire was formulated. These interviews were transcribed and the text was studied to discern patterns associated with our interests. It was evident that this phase found similarities with the original research of Wills and Case-Smith (1996), but it did provide some interesting deviations, such as the limited issue of economics associated with managed care. Since each of states are among the last to embrace [or be forced to embrace] the concept of managed care, this is not an unsurprising finding. However given this revelation, these findings should be tempered when compared to other states with more managed care penetration.

The second phase of this study entailed a cross-sectional mail survey sent to all OT's within our three state area of Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana (N≅2000). Since the researchers could not screen out only those with a rural school practice, it was decided to include all OT's and simply have them note these qualifiers. Therefore, the research could be enhanced to now look at differences between rural and urban therapists, and school based and non-school based therapists. According to Cohen (1977), a sample of 116 would be required to yield a **power of .90, α .05** with 15 independent variables and an estimated population variance of .20 within our cohort.

Survey questions were based upon previous research and our preliminary qualitative findings. Therapist demographics include: age, gender, martial status, rural employment, school system employment, and educational level. Therapist perceptions include: adequate preparation during OT training, adequate field experience prior to graduation, ability to work autonomously with special needs children, ability to work independently within a school system, level of current job satisfaction, and intentions to leave current place of employment. Additional questions focused on organizational variables specific to: extender follow-up on-site, peers on-site, supervisor on-site and local access to continuing education courses/classes.

Study Findings: The typical respondent therapist (n=236) is: 34 years of age, 89% female, 65% married, 70% have a BS degree, and have been an OT for 10 years. TABLE 1 provides a complete description of the respondents. Initial inferential findings suggest that therapists feel a lack of ability to work autonomously with special needs children within a school system. Further, they feel that they had limited to non-existent exposure to this environment during their on-campus education and weren't prepared for the lack of professionalism within this environment. Initial regression analysis (TABLE 2) suggests: 1) non self-employed individuals, lower levels of job satisfaction, higher levels

TABLE 1-Descritpive Statistics

variable	*mean*	*std dev*	*range*
AGE	34.27	8.45	21 to 63
GENDER	89.1% female; 10.9% male		
MARITAL STATUS	27.1% single; 66.9% married 2.5% divorced		
YEARS_OT	9.73	8.01	1 to 40
ADEQUATE FIELD WORK	79.4% no;20.6% yes		
CURRENT SCHOOL EMPLOY	78.9% no; 21.1% yes		
ED_LEVEL	70.1% BS; 29.9% MS/MOT		
SELF_EMPLOY	87.1% no; 12.9% yes		
LIVE IN RURAL	69.0% no; 31.0% yes		
CURRENT SCHOOOL EMPLOY	78.9% no; 21.1% yes		
SUPR ON-SITE	51.6% no; 48.6% yes		
PEERS ON-SITE	34.7% no; 65.3% yes		
PREPARE SCHOOL SYSTEM	17.5% not prepared 36.7% fairly unprepared 30.8% some prepared 12.5% fair prepared 2.5% well prepared		
WORK AUTON W CHILDREN	7.5% not prepared 24.2% fair unprepared 35.0% some prepared 29.2% fair prepared 4.2% well prepared		
INTENT TO LEAVE EMPLOY	46.8% no; 53.2 yes		
OVERALL JOB SATIS	0.8% not satisfied 6.7% fair unsatisfied 12.6% some satisfied 47.1% fair satisfied 33.6% very satisfied		

of education, the absence of peers on-site, and fewer years as a practicing OT are predictors of intention to leave; and 2) perceptions of preparedness to work in a school system and the absence of peers on-site are predictors of ability to work autonomously with children.

TABLE 2- Regression Results

DV: INTENT TO LEAVE			***DV: PREPARE TO WORK AUTON***		
IV:	***coefficient***	***std error***	***IV:***	***coefficient***	***std error***
AUTONWK	.275	(.048)	- - - - -		
CSH_EMP	1.202	(.868)	CSH_EMP	-.005	(.209)
ED_LEV	1.156†	(.672)	ED_LEV	-.092	(.142)
GENDER	-1.308	(1.167)	GENDER	.117	(.304)
MARSTAT	.465	(.656)	MARSTAT	-.044	(.136)
OT_YRS	-.076†	(.044)	OT_YRS	-.004	(.011)
ADQ_FLD	-.718	(.916)	ADQ_FLD	-.140	(.214)
OVRL_SAT	-1.039*	(.450)	OVRL_SAT	.128	(.097)
LOC_CEUS	.454	(.375)	LOC_CEUS	-.044	(.089)
PEER_SITE	1.454†	(.902)	PEER_SITE	-.371*	(.205)
SELF_EMP	-2.453*	(1.416)	SELF_EMP	.100	(.264)
SCHSYS	-.067	(.499)	SCHSYS	.696**	(.086)
constant	.093		constant	1.089	
model sign.	.003		model sign.	.001	
R^2	.316		R^2	.523	

† p<.10
* p<.05
** p<.01

NOTE: Intention to Leave model is logistic regression (LOGIT) and the Prepared to Work Autonomously is an ordinary least squares (OLS) model. R^2 for LOGIT is pseudo R^2 approximation.

At the present juncture, we have 236 respondents of 1039 mail-outs. This represents an initial response rate of 23 percent. However, given the limited time since initial mail-out, it is felt that our final response rate should ultimately reach 30 to 40 percent given past experience with similar populations.

Conclusions: These results reinforce previous findings and suggest that indeed the rurally-based OT perceives an inability to work autonomously with children. Further, this degree to apparent frustration is manifested in higher intentions to leave site of employment. A common significant predictor variable between both equations is the availability of peers on-site. In both equations, peers on-site are related to positive behavioral outcomes. This highlights the need for collegiality among these professional caregivers, and their need to be associated with members of the medical model of OT. Overall, these findings are consistent with past research and don't suggest any findings that are unexpected. However given the qualitative level of prior research, this initial effort serves to provide a baseline understanding of the plight of rurally-based school OT's versus their urban and non-school counterparts. Subsequent testing of this growing cohort and future studies will based on this preliminary inquiry. The researchers will further explore these relationships and introduce additional dependent variables along the same lines.

From an educational perspective, it is apparent that OT's feel overwhelmingly that they are unprepared to enter the rural and school system work settings. With a continuing emphasis placed upon rural employment opportunities, it is important for the educator to re-visit clinical training sites and strive to identify students interested or in need of rural exposures.

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Available upon request.

Doris Paez, Ph.D. and Ruth Fletcher-Carter, Ph.D.
New Mexico State University
Department of Special Education/ Communication Disorders

EXPLORING THE PERSONAL CULTURES OF RURAL CULTURALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

There is a growing appreciation among scholars and school personnel that awareness of the characteristics which distinguish cultural groups can increase effectiveness in working with children and adolescents served by special education (Baca & Cervantes, 1989; Bailey, 1989; Chamberlain & Medinos-Landurand, 1991; Correa, 1992; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1990). It has been suggested that without such awareness, misperceptions and miscommunications between the teacher, the student, and the student's family may occur resulting in poorer classroom performance and impaired parent-school relationships (Chamberlain & Medinos-Landurand. This is particularly true for deaf students who may be members of more than one cultural group and isolated from any one of the groups (e.g., Hispanic and Deaf; Native-American and Deaf) (Christensen, 1993).

Indeed, students who are Deaf and African-American, or Deaf and Asian, or Deaf and Native American, or Deaf and Hispanic seldom encounter teachers who are even Deaf let alone Deaf and representative of their ethnic/racial group. It is significant to note that while culturally diverse groups make-up 40% (i.e., African-American-17%, Hispanic-16%, American Indian 1%, Asian /Pacific 4% and others 2%)) of America's deaf and hard-of-hearing school population (Gallaudet Center for Demographic Studies, 1994), only 14% of the special education teaching professionals represent those cultural diverse groups (Cook & Boe, 1995). Added to the dilemma of an imbalanced teacher-student cultural ratio is the reality for deaf students that more than 90% percent of their parents are hearing (Gallaudet Center for Demographic Studies) and one third of them reside in rural school attendance areas (Silver , 1986). Thus, the primary responsibility then falls upon rural teachers (most of whom are Euro-American and hearing and not trained specifically in deaf education) to expose deaf, culturally diverse children to their ethnic roots and their Deaf culture, while facing limited resources and long distances between schools and services (Helge, 1980).

Teacher's Roles in the Identification and Use of Cultural Diversity

Exploring cultural groups, according to Phinney (1996), requires that three dimensions of ethnicity be addressed, including: (a) the cultural values, attitudes and behaviors that characterizes ethnic groups; (b) ethnic identity or the subjective sense of ethnic group membership; and (c) the experiences associated with minority status, including powerlessness, discrimination, and minority status. She also suggests that political, economic, and historical factors are also relevant components of ethnicity (i.e. sociopolitical context). Moreover, Phinney

(1996) acknowledges that these components are overlapping and confounding, but they can be separated conceptually for purposes of discussion, examination, and intervention (See figure 1).

Curricular Adaptation

After exploring a student's personal culture teachers need to generate strategies for adapting the curricular methodology and content in the context of the cultures of all assigned students. The question is what aspect of the curriculum does one adapt? A recent presentation by Deaf adults speaking before a class on Multicultural Issues in Deafness at New Mexico State University may help in deciphering the types of adaptations needed. These individuals all shared a common thread among their needs--(a) the need to know about their heritage (hearing and deaf); (b) to know about their religions whether Christian, Judaism, Shinto, Animism, Taoism, Confucianism or Buddhism and to participate; (c) to know about their ethnic communication styles and social mores; as well as (d) to know celebrations and observances whether Kwanzaa or Quinceñiera, Christmas or Hanukkah; Easter or Id al-Ada; and (f) to have role models who share their ethnic or racial heritage and deafness. Presenters were asking for methodologies and culturally relevant curricular content that are appropriate for culturally diverse student populations.

Application of the Personal Culture Framework

Having accepted the paradigm of Personal Cultures influenced by family, neighborhood, vicinity/community and school; and having further accepted the paradigm of a framework in which to record the various influences; how can a teacher put the information from the personal culture to work in the classroom?

Cultural Brokers

The exploration of students' personal cultures requires the use of "cultural brokers" (Correa, 1989). These brokers are individuals who provide a bridge between cultures can be used as informants, mediators, and/or advocates. As cultural brokers, they can share information regarding cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors; issues related to group membership; experiences associated with minority status; and transforming life events. Depending on the situation, parents, other family members, or members of the community may act as cultural brokers (Correa, 1989). They may be found within the school: bilingual educators, English as Second Language specialists, migrant educators, Chapter 1 teachers, and staff. Functionally, the use of a cultural broker requires that the teacher discuss all of the variables in the *Student's Personal Culture Form* with as many brokers as possible

Steps for Applying Framework

Following are the six steps used in applying the *Personal Culture Framework* which includes the use of the *Student's Personal Culture* and *Curricular Strategy Forms* with the cultural broker(s (See Figures 1 & 2)..

Step 1: Based on information gathered from cultural broker(s)/informant(s) and research, the teacher writes down key words/phrases to complete each cell in the *Personal Culture Form.*

Step 2: The teacher circles the variables on the Personal Culture Form which are NOT SHARED across the five locus columns: (a) family, (b) neighborhood, (c) vicinity/community, (d) school, and (e) child.

Step 3: The teacher then lists the variables not shared in the first column of the *Strategy Form.*

Step 4: The teacher then circles the Loci which do not share the variable in column 2 of the *Strategy Form.*

Step 5: Teacher and cultural broker(s) generate strategies for addressing these NOT SHARED variables within the four dimensions. These curricular strategies are written in column 3 of the *CurricularStrategy Form.*

Step 6: Strategies are then encorporated into students' IEPs and curricular methods and content.

Garcia and Malkin (1993) advocate that the goals and objectives on a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) should specify responsiveness to cultural and linguistic variables. Instruction then should: respond at the student's instructional level, to expectations of the family; and be sensitive to culturally-based responses to the disability; include a language use plan; and address language development.

To demonstrate the application of the *Personal Culture Framework*, a case study/vignette is presented. Following the vignette are examples of how the cultural variables may be incorporated into the framework.

Case Study

Imagine the subject you are about to meet is in the your classroom What would you need to know about your student and his/herr family to make learning relevant and to ensure that information from their personal cultures are incorporated into your curriculum content and methods, and that the information from your student's personal cultures are used to enhance parent/family involvement with the schools?

Deaf Child of Hearing Parents--American Indian Heritage

> The student in question is deaf (bi-lateral profound loss), the parents are hearing. There are no other known family members who are deaf. The parents have had no experience with Deaf adults. Several students from the reservation attend the State

> School ;for the Deaf. The parents are professional artists/craftsmen and make silver and turquise jewlery which they sell at Indian Markets. They live on the reservation The child is enrolled in a regional day program for the hearing impaired. Forty percent of her education is within a special class for deaf students with mainstreaming services (e.g., interpreters) for selected courses 60 % of the day.. The reservation (neighborhood) is rural and remote. The special class for hearing impaired students is not located in the nearby town. It is located in a larger urban community which hosts the regional special education protgrams.. The child is bused daily. The community surrounding the reservation is predominantly of Euro-American descent and middle to low socio-economic status. The teachers in the regional program for the Deaf are Ero-American One instructional assistant in the program is deaf. She graduated from the State School for the Deaf, but she is also Euro-American descent.

Student's Personal Culture

Completing the *Student's Personal Culture* form (Figure 1), the teacher and brokers (mother, bilingual specialist, Johnson-O'Malley Cooradinator --who is himself American Indian, and the classroom assistant) identified the variables **not shared** among the child and her school, family, immediate neighborhood, and vicinity/community were (a) **demograhpic influences** -- family and immediate neighborhood reside on a reservation with unique housing,and isolation; (b) **verbal behaviors--** only -spoken English by the schools and business establishment except for the special class for the hard of hearing and deaf hich uses English and some American Sign Lnaguage. On the reservation English and Navajo are spoken. (c) **nonverbal behaviors**-- eye contact is integral to the Deaf culture at school for grammer and inflection in signs. Eye contact is disrespectful among the Native American Tribe, (d) **religious/spritual and temporal orientation--**differs noticably. Religious affilitations in the larger community outside the reservation are limited to scheduled times and days. For the family and neighborhood, religious practices permeate the lives of the residents--celebrations are held on an "as needed basis--feast days do not follow the western calender. Children may miss much more school than the Euro-American counterparts;. (e) **Other variables** identified as different by the cultural brokers were **dominant ethnic identify, generational contect, decsion-making processes, observations,** and **family definition.** Last but not least were the **transforming life events**-for the parents, giving birth to a profoundly deaf child.

Curricular Strategies

The teacher completed the *Student's Personal Culture Form* with cultural brokers. The findings revealed that the child, family, and neighborhood share a number of cultural variables, but the child differs from the family and neighborhood due to **verbal and nonverbal** language (e.g., need for formal ASL, expressive faces, eye contact, and pointing for ASL). High affect, eye contact, and pointing are in conflict with Tribal communication styles and mores. Parents asked that Trival social mores also be taught along with Deaf Culture and language. Speical events for American Indian Children at the school and at the Reservation Indian Center are to involve the student. Use of interpreters will be utilized when involved with hearing students and communicty members.

Regarding **dominant ethnic identify**--to respond to strong family identity with the Tribal heritage, the parents also offered to bring tribal customs to schoo that are not sacred.. Teachers are asked to continue to work with the family and Johnson O'Malley staff to have them serve as cultural brokers to share religious/spiritual affiliation, observances, ceremonies, leisure activities, attire, and foods. Tribal Information not sacred is to be incorporated into class thematic teaching. For example, when teaching about houses, structures are to include hogans, and pueblos and tepees. Similarly, when teaching about dance, ceremonial dances are to be included. Class trips to the reservation are planned for feast days For **verbal and nonverbal** variables, ASL clearly requires pointing for pronominalization. The school provided parents information on alternative communication modes. The mother and father have chosen ASL in spite of the conflict with Tribal mores. The parents and child are to be put in contact with the Inter-tribal Deaf Council (IDC) in a distant city. Interpreters for Native Americans are to be sought. **Experiences associated with minority status** are to be addressed also. For example, American holidays which present the European view are also to be viewed viewed from the Native American's perspective (e.g., Columbus Day, Feast Days) within the curriculum. Vocabulary to explain tribal events and items and jewelrey making are to be shared on vido tape with the the parents so that they might share information spontaneously with their daughter during "teachable moments." Literature and children's stories from the Native American tradition are to be incorporated into story telling time. The Deaf adult mentor/classroom assistant will given Native American Folk Lore in order to be able to tell the stories in ASL.

Suggestions for Teachers

Beyond the application of the *Personal Culture Framework Form,* it is suggested that teachers become familiar with the cultures included in their school and community--this allows one to identify materials, strategies, and resources that are inclusive of the students taught on a regular basis. Teachers are asked to update the information annually to void sterotypic information. Sources used should acknowledge within-group differences. Educators are asked to obtain information that is beyond holiday/tourist curriculum. Historical experiences, migration pattern, accomplishments of members of the group, values, belief systems, and communication styles are to be included(Garcia & Malkin, 1993). To incorporate racial and ethnic cultures with the Deaf culture, teachers should contact ethnic Deaf organizations (e.g., Inter-Tribal Council of the Deaf; Asian Deaf Conference, Hispanic Deaf Conference, Black-Deaf Advocacy). Computer literacy skills with the Internet and World Wide Webb afford teachers access to information that is contemporary and up to date from online libraries, bulletin boards, or chat rooms.

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Figure 1

STUDENT'S PERSONAL CULTURE FORM						
Student's Name:		L	O	C	U	S
DIMENSIONS	CULTURAL VARIABLES	Family	Neighborhood	**Vicinity/ Community**	School	**Child**
Cultural Values, Attitudes and Behaviors	Demographic Influences (urban, suburban, rural)					
	Verbal Behaviors (the what, how, when , where and why of language)					
	Nonverbal Behaviors (show of affection, meaning of common facial expression/ gestures, use of space)					
	Achievement Orientation / Education Level					
	Temporal Orientation (past-, present-, future-oriented)					
	Thinking/Cognitive Processes					
	Religious/Spiritual Affiliations					
	Leisure Activities (recreation, sports, hobbies, stress relievers)					
Sense of Group Membership	Dominant Ethnic Identity (country of origin, national affiliations, ethnic density)					
	U.S. Generational Context (first-, second-, third-generation, etc.)					
	Socio-economic Status (low, middle, high)					
	Decision-making/ Action-taking Attitudes					
	Observances (holidays, celebrations, ceremonies)					
	Family Definition (influence of family/kin)					
Experiences Associated with Minority Status	Sociopolitical Context (immigration pattern, resident status, experiences with racism)					
Transforming Life Events	Normal Events (developmental transitions)					
	Critical Events (traumatic events, illness, surgeries)					

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Figure 2

CURRICULAR STRATEGY FORM

CULTURAL VARIABLES	LOCUS F=Family N= Neighborhood V=Vicinity/Community S=School C=Child	STRATEGIES
	F N V S C	
	F N V S C	
	F N V S C	
	F N V S C	
	F N V S C	
	F N V S C	
	F N V S C	
	F N V S C	
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Carl R. Morgan
MaryAnn Demchak
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV

EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

Across the country the number of paraprofessionals employed to assist in providing education and related services to students with disabilities has increased significantly in the last 20 years (Blalock, 1991). As the number of paraprofessionals has increased, their job duties have expanded from primarily clerical in nature to instructional involvement. In any location, paraprofessionals have become key members of the educational team. However, paraprofessionals are especially important team members in rural communities because they are frequently more likely to stay in the community as compared to certified teachers (Ashbaker & Morgan, 1996). In these communities paraprofessionals are frequently the "constant" in the education of students with disabilities. This continuity of service provider can be important to the educational success of students with disabilities. Additionally, paraprofessionals are frequently used in rural school districts when certified personnel are not available (Helge, 1984). In this capacity paraprofessionals are likely to act as a support to related services personnel in carrying out various recommendations. In rural districts the increased use of paraprofessionals provides a valuable resource that is often essential to the success of educational programs.

Although an increasingly large number of paraprofessionals are employed in school settings to assist in providing educational and related services to students with disabilities, neither paraprofessionals nor professionals are typically prepared to interact with one another. Professionals are infrequently provided with guidelines or training regarding interactions with or supervision of paraprofessionals. Similarly, paraprofessionals often receive little training regarding instructional strategies to use with students or strategies for interacting with other adults. Unfortunately, several other variables can threaten effective collaboration between professionals and paraprofessionals: (a) inadequate communication, (b) absence of job descriptions, (c) lack of time for joint planning, (d) confusion or dissatisfaction with job assignments, and (e) the opinion of some professionals that paraprofessionals are not valued or important (Blalock, 1991). Additionally, paraprofessionals are frequently dissatisfied with their jobs due to factors such as poor salary, lack of opportunity to advance, lack of administrative support, and lack of respect (Passaro, Pickett, Latham, & HongBo, 1994).

The purpose of this paper is to discuss strategies to counter these threatening variables so that it is more likely that professionals and paraprofessionals can collaborate effectively. These strategies include, but are not limited to, (a) clarifying roles and responsibilities through development of job descriptions, (b) methods of discussing expectations regarding the paraprofessionals' activities to be completed and the degree of independence, (c) daily scheduling, (d) on-going communication methods, and (e) providing regularly scheduled training opportunities to paraprofessionals.

Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities

According to Blalock (1993), the largest single area of frustration between professionals and paraprofessionals is related to the lack of specification regarding respective roles and responsibilities. A key means of addressing this potential obstruction to effective collaboration is to develop job descriptions for each position. It may be beneficial to develop and share with all team members job descriptions for general and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators. It is important to remember that professionals have the ultimate responsibility for students' educational progress and outcomes while paraprofessionals have a role of providing support and assistance to the professionals. Joint discussions regarding job descriptions can identify possible areas of conflict that can be resolved at the onset of the collaborative relationship. Additionally, these discussions can be used to identify areas where training may be needed.

Discussing Expectations

In addition to differing on expectations regarding specific job duties, professionals and paraprofessionals may differ significantly concerning the amount of independence, creativity, and structure expected on the job (McKenzie & Houk, 1986). For example, the professional in a classroom might expect that after initial instructions the paraprofessional should be independent and require no further direction. On the other hand, if the paraprofessional expects on-going delivery of specific directions, conflict between these two individuals could arise. McKenzie and Houk (1986) provide two simple, 4-item questionnaires that can be completed by professionals and paraprofessionals to facilitate discussion of professional expectations regarding paraprofessional supervision as compared to the preferred style of the paraprofessional. Whether one uses these questionnaires or simply has an open discussion, clarification of expectations pertaining to degree and type of supervision can lead to a more open and collaborative partnership. These discussions can focus around the areas of independence, creativity, degree of supervision, and scheduling expectations. The following questions could be used as the focus of such discussions:

1. **Degree of Independence:** As a paraprofessional, do you prefer to be told in specific detail what you are expected to do or do you prefer general directions? As a professional, do you intend to give specific and frequent directions or do you expect the paraprofessional to demonstrate initiative?

2. **Creativity:** As a paraprofessional, do you prefer easier, routine activities or challenging, complex tasks? As a professional, do you expect the paraprofessional to complete routine or complex tasks?

3. **Degree of Supervision:** As a paraprofessional, how closely do you want to be supervised? As a professional, how closely do you intend to provide supervision to the paraprofessional?

4. **Scheduling:** As a paraprofessional, do you prefer a fixed or flexible schedule? As a professional, do you expect the paraprofessional to follow a fixed or flexible schedule?

Another strategy to clarify job expectations is for professionals to list all of the tasks they expect to have paraprofessionals complete. The assigned paraprofessionals can then review this list to indicate those responsibilities with which they are comfortable and those with which they need more direction or training.

Establishing and clarifying expectations as soon as possible can lead to a more satisfying relationship between professionals and paraprofessionals.

Daily Scheduling

Sometimes it can be beneficial for the classroom schedule to delineate who is supervising what activities at what time. Not only do the professionals and paraprofessionals then know what is expected, but the students also know. This information can also be beneficial to visitors to the classroom (e.g., administrators). Incorporating professional and paraprofessional responsibilities into the classroom schedule can allow classroom activities to occur much more smoothly, which is ultimately to the benefit of the students.

On-going Communication

On-going communication between professionals and paraprofessionals is vital to their collaborative relationship and to positive educational outcomes for students. There must be a way for professionals to provide feedback as well as to convey information to paraprofessionals regarding changes in instructional and behavior management programs. It is also a time for paraprofessionals to obtain clarification on any issues.

Joint planning time. A critical component of communication is time for professionals and paraprofessionals to plan together. Unfortunately, a frequently cited problem is that paraprofessionals are often excluded from collaborative planning efforts due to job constraints. For example, paraprofessionals frequently work fewer hours than do professionals, paraprofessionals are unlikely to have planning time included in their schedules, and paraprofessionals are frequently assigned other duties during the time professionals are free (e.g., play ground duty) (Friend & Cook, 1996). Due to their daily contact with students, paraprofessionals frequently have valuable information to share regarding the students with whom they work and it is unfortunate that they are so frequently excluded from being true participating team members.

In order to have paraprofessionals be participating team members, it is necessary for them to be able to attend planning meetings on a regular basis (i.e., at least weekly). This joint planning time is needed so that professionals can convey information to paraprofessionals regarding changes in instructional or behavior management programs or any other information important for the paraprofessional to know. It might be possible that the paraprofessionals in the school could have a rotating schedule regarding duties (e.g., lunch, recess, before and after school) so that once a week they have time to meet with the professionals with whom they work. Another method of providing a small amount of joint planning time is to begin a peer tutoring program with another class. While students are working with one another, professionals and paraprofessionals can use a few minutes for joint planning. Similarly, a third method of obtaining joint planning time, for at least a few minutes, is to provide students with independent work for the first part of the school day. A fourth possibility is to ask paraprofessionals to come in early (and then leave early) one day per week for before-school meetings or to come in late and then stay for after-school meetings.

Regularly scheduled planning meetings ultimately benefit the students. In addition, regular meetings can help to avoid conflicts or crises between professionals and paraprofessionals. Regular, face-to-face communication in a setting free of distraction is essential to successful collaboration.

"On-the-spot" communication. In addition to having joint planning time incorporated into the schedule on a regular basis, it is important for professionals and paraprofessionals to have a plan for "on-the-spot" communication. Unplanned changes in scheduling and/or manner of interacting with students can occur quickly and information may need to be conveyed to paraprofessionals almost immediately. For example, a student with behavior problems who comes to school with little sleep the night before may need to have his schedule altered quickly (e.g., expecting the student to complete difficult tasks only with adult assistance) in order to avoid major behavioral outbursts.

Although this type of communication is essential, it does not replace regularly scheduled meetings.

Written communication. Professionals and paraprofessionals also have the option of having a formal or informal method of written communication in place. Written communication can provide directions for the day or a specific lesson or activity, as well as general information of which the paraprofessional should be aware. Just as on-the-spot communication does not replace regularly scheduled meetings, nor does written communication replace these meetings.

On-going Training Opportunities

Given the shortages and changing roles of special education and related services professionals, it is anticipated that there will continue to be an increased need for paraprofessionals to ensure that students with disabilities receive an appropriate education. Although it is essential that the paraprofessionals receive the appropriate training to meet the demands of their important roles, training is frequently provided "on-the-job" and "on-the-fly" by the professionals to whom they are assigned. The process of training paraprofessionals should be more formalized than this typical approach.

Johnson, Lasater, and Fitzgerald (1997) suggest that a core of information is critical to all paraprofessionals: (a) paraprofessionals' roles and responsibilities, (b) learner characteristics, (c) data collection for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and behavior management plans, (d) behavioral and instructional strategies, and (e) health-related issues. To determine the specific training that is to be provided at a specific site, a needs assessment should be conducted. This needs assessment could be formal or could be based on the results of the strategies discussed above (e.g., discussion regarding job expectations). Throughout the training process it should be conveyed that paraprofessionals are valued and important to the education of students with disabilities. Paraprofessionals are likely to desire, as well as benefit from, those trainings that focus on strategies and practices that can be implemented with the students with whom they are currently working rather than to receive training on generic strategies and practices (Johnson et al., 1997). This type of training provides paraprofessionals with concrete strategies that they can take back to the classroom and implement immediately. When professionals and paraprofessionals can attend trainings together, greater collaboration can occur which should lead to maximum benefit for the students.

Summary

Using the strategies discussed in this article can help to address the barriers that interfere with effective collaboration between professionals and paraprofessionals. The strategies

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might also help the paraprofessionals to feel they are valued members of the students' educational teams. In order to decrease the turnover rate of paraprofessionals it is important to address the factors that contribute to attrition (e.g., administrative support, training, respect). The strategies presented here can address some of these factors and promote a more positive and pleasant work environment for paraprofessionals as well as professionals.

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Diane T. Woodrum, Ed.D.
Special Education Department
504 Allen Hall
West Virginia University
Morgantown, WV 26506-6122

TRAINING RURAL REGULAR EDUCATORS IN COLLABORATIVE SKILLS- DISTANCE EDUCATION AT ITS BEST

The state of West Virginia lies entirely within the boundaries of Appalachia. West Virginia has a population of less than 1.8 million people and is characterized by rugged mountain regions, sparsely populated areas, and harsh winters. The capital of West Virginia, Charleston, only has a population of approximately 75,000 people and the majority of people in the state live in rural, often isolated areas. West Virginia still has counties that do not have stoplights. When looking at the demographics of West Virginia, the need for distance education becomes obvious.

In 1992, The West Virginia State Department of Education wrote it's inclusive schooling policy called the West Virginia Integrated Education Initiative. The initiative states that the Office of Special Education Programs and Assurances believes that all students will receive equal and quality educational opportunities when each exceptional student succeeds in an integrated environment that meets the student's needs. (WV Department of Education, 1992) "Success in an integrated environment will enhance future opportunities for the student to work competitively, live independently and develop social relationships - eventual goals we desire for all children." (Thabet, 1990, p. 8)

Since the passage of the EHA in 1975, many previously unserved students were brought into public school education. It was felt by many, however, that even though these programs established a right to education, they had failed to overcome the separation between general and special education. Furthermore, the dual separate system (special and regular) failed to show student significant benefits.

The West Virginia Integrated Education Initiative's number one goal became: To Provide technical assistance designed to promote a unified system that fosters integration. (WV Department of Education, 1992, p.8.) The Initiative document further states that only through the collaborative and cooperative efforts of all educators at the local, district, and state levels can unified educational systems that foster integration become a reality. The priority goal focuses on providing technical assistance at all levels in planning and implementing systems change. The policy requires that teachers receive inservice training and support.

Distance education became the most likely avenue to successfully train regular educators in the practices of collaboration and consultation. Interactive telecommunications instruction in West Virginia occurs through a Special Education Distance Learning Consortium sponsored by the Satellite Network of West Virginia and the West Virginia State Department of Education. Telecommunications in West Virginia is through ED-NET which has interactive capabilities of one-way and two-way audio; one-way and two way video and multi-site interactivity. It is a satellite system with fiber/microwave between the sites. Students may view satellite courses literally anywhere in the state. (O'Keefe, 1988)

Research indicates that it is unreasonable to expect teachers to change behavior or practice without substantive training. It cannot be assumed that special or regular educators possess the skills or experience to successfully collaborate. (Paul, Rosselli, & Evans (1995). Training, therefore, had to be developed to encourage teachers to address their feelings, their instructional concerns, their need for training in academic areas relating to their knowledge about exceptionalities, technical assistance in terms of behavioral management issues and classroom arrangements.

Integrated education extends far beyond the legal requirement of placing students in the least restrictive environment mandated by IDEA. The intention of integrated education is to provide a unified system in which all students have access to and inclusion in all activities of the total school environment. According to Paul et al. (1995) the nature and full meaning of educational reform continues to elude the full grasp of our existing philosophies and resists anything approximating consensus on implementation. These difficulties only serve to cause difficulty for those in charge of state and local policies for public schools and for teacher preparation programs.

Starting with the 1995 academic year, The Special Education Department at West Virginia University developed a two-semester, six credit hour graduate training program intended for regular classroom teachers (two three-hour classes). The courses were delivered to over 100 teachers (regular and special) via interactive satellite. The cycle of courses is being repeated this academic year (1996-1997).

The course that was offered during the fall semester, 1995, was a course for regular educators concerning an overview of the areas of special education most often targeted during inclusion. The course presents a comprehensive overview of exceptionalities which require special education services, resources, or support for enhanced development. A particular focus is the delivery of services in West Virginia. Since children are served categorically in West Virginia, the course offered categorical segments that presented characteristics, definitions, prevalence, state and federal definitions and criteria for placement, classroom management issues, and learning characteristics. This latter segments of the course hopefully started the classroom teacher thinking about all of the issues facing inclusive classrooms.

Requirements for this class included actual tutoring of children classified as exceptional, as well as observations across different service configurations. The students were required to keep a journal during this journey. The journal was to contain unobtrusive observations concerning their journeys, reactions, and feelings. The first semester ended with a natural bridge to the course content for the second semester.

The second course, Collaboration/Consultation for Inclusive Schooling was offered during the spring semester, 1996. This course was designed to give regular and special educators the communication and professional skills to do collaborative consultation within the context of an interactive team. This course allowed a regular educator to develop a relationship with a special educator and together they: (1) collaborated on a child(s) with special needs in the inclusive classroom; (2) set up a collaborative team within their school; and (3) developed an inclusion plan for their school. This course utilized collaborative teams from various locations across West Virginia as part of the training.

These courses were delivered via interactive satellite to 45 different sites across the state. One of the most beneficial aspects of interactive satellite delivery is the opportunity to learn what successes others in the state are having as well as learning about the difficulties they are having. This enabled the students to problem solve solutions together.

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Fay Balch Jackson
University of West Alabama
Livingston, Alabama

The Effects of Using a Cross-Content Learning Strategy; Read, Imagine, Decide, and Do (RIDD) on the Academic Performance of Rural Secondary Students with Mild Learning and Behavior Disorders

In 1991, DeYoung made an interesting observation. Children in rural areas of America may be considered "at risk". He stated that at risk children, at both the elementary and secondary levels, are typically identified as poor academic achievers and/or those who may drop out of school prior to learning the skills necessary to successfully enter adult life in the U.S. DeYoung further noted that the growing body of rural education literature and social science literature focusing on school effectiveness presents some compelling arguments which suggest that many, if not most, rural students in America may be "at risk", assuming that school completion and school success are desired goals of American educators.

Miller (1993) posited that rural community viability becomes threatened as the rural population decreases with the out migration of the young, and often better-educated work force. The author further noted that the vast majority of these rural migrants resettle in metropolitan areas, enlarging the population and straining the existing infrastructure. This population shift creates a situation of double jeopardy. Miller continued to note that while metropolitan areas, swollen to capacity, choke on the rapid growth, rural communities lose their citizens and suffer from social and economic malnutrition. To add to these difficulties, Swanson and Butler (1988) posited that dropout rates tend to be higher in rural areas than in metropolitan areas. Miller (1993) also stated that higher paying industries are also less likely to locate in areas where they will not be able to provide a skilled work force.

Along with these troubling statements, there are some words of encouragement. It seems that the rural poor are more likely to own their own homes, pay less to raise their children and have a slightly lower annual cost of living (constructed from U.S. Congress, 1989). There also seems to be a sense of unity in rural areas that may be less strong in metropolitan America. The community survives because people have such a strong desire to live there and do something about it (Miller, 1991).

A further advantage to rural areas is "intergenerational closure" (Coleman, 1987). Coleman used this term to describe a network whereby generations of families have grown up in close proximity and often communicate with the parents of a child who is experiencing difficulty. Miller (1991), however, noted that this integrated closure has its drawbacks as well as advantages. There is a lack of exclusivity and a separatist attitude that can isolate the child from the outside world. Coleman (1987) posited that the child loses one kind of opportunity by remaining embedded within the narrow constraints of the community and gains another kind-- the opportunity to have warmth, respect, and satisfaction of a member of the community as an adult. Kohlenburg and Kohlenburg (1991), while studying rural America, added that "Often we were impressed, sometimes we were awestruck, at the almost casual acceptance of the idea that it is *necessary* to care for one's neighbors, friends, and family members. Such attitudes are not foreign in cities, but they are not reinforced by the circumstances of urban life."

It would seem, that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, but American rural communities are facing great distress. More and more young people are leaving rural areas for greater economic opportunities in urban areas (Coleman, 1987). Therefore, rural educators are faced with even a greater set of difficulties than those in metropolitan areas. If the school is to provide the community with a strong work force, an aggressive middle class, and a populous that is made up of individuals who have adequate self-esteem and self efficacy, a conscious effort must be made by educators to find ways that will allow **all** students, especially those "at risk" and those with mild learning disabilities, to develop the abilities that will enhance such characteristics.

It is the purpose of this paper to present information concerning a cross-content learning and teaching strategy. This process is one that can assist students and teachers to develop self-esteem and self-efficacy within the academic setting. A further aim is to provide instruction al guidance within the framework of the strategy.

The Development of Read, Imagine, Decide, and Do (RIDD)

Teachers who have been in the field of learning disabilities noticed that many students do not experience success, even when the material presented is on the appropriate reading level. The teachers often reported hearing comments such as, "I can't even do this baby stuff."

In an effort to help students find ways to achieve success, the researcher observed how they performed while completing academic tasks. A number of common behaviors became obvious, particularly in the area of reading directions. First, students would stop reading at the end of a line of print, rather than at the end of the instructions. This may be related to the fact that students who are young or inexperienced readers do not understand that written text is supposed to make sense (Garner, 1991). Second, students would often scan the information to look for indicator words such as "circle" or "underline" without noticing *what* to circle or underline. A third behavior was that students would begin a particular activity without reading the directions at all and assume that the exercise would be exactly the same as that modeled by the teacher.

Another difficulty that students commonly faced was in the area of math. Smith and Rivera (1991) stated that a number of studies have been conducted in the area of word problems. These works have produced evidence that students with learning disabilities have more difficulty than average- and high-ability students in determining the appropriate operation and algorithm when solving word problems. Many times, teachers observed that their students presupposed word problems would include only one kind of procedure. The students would begin to add, subtract, multiply or divide the numbers listed within problem. With some elementary math books, this method works well, but in more advanced texts, the students produced incorrect answers even though the math they completed on their papers was done properly. Failing at math that is generally on a fourth or fifth grade level for a student in high school (Smith & Rivera, 1991) can cause a decrease in self esteem because students are very aware when they are not in the same course of study as their peers.

Reading in content areas produced a great deal of difficulty for students with learning disabilities. There were several behaviors that were documented both in the literature and by classroom teachers. First, in reading, inexperienced readers have an illusion that comprehension means decoding successfully, and fast (Baker, 1985). Baker further noted that young or poor readers tended to rely on lexical evaluation of a text, which is placing the main emphasis of a text on the single word rather than the relationship of words and sentences to the entire text. The educators frequently stated that students would pronounce every word within a text perfectly, but would have no concept of the meaning within the passage. In 1993, Manzo and Manzo defined reading as the act of *simultaneously* reading the lines, reading between the lines, and reading beyond the lines. In other words, it is important for readers to reconstruct the author's basic message, reconstruct the implied message, and make judgements about the significance of the author's message. If students only read the lines, the majority of the meaning of a text is lost.

Reading in general, whether it is in history, science, literature, or math has elicited poor performance from students with learning disabilities. When students find reading a constant challenge, they do not enjoy the activity; therefore, they avoid it as much as possible. Since students in rural areas are faced with a lack of cultural and social diversity (Coleman, 1987), reading is important in providing the knowledge necessary to increase academic efficiency. Any skill that is not used will deteriorate. Reading is certainly no different. Some teachers noted that when students were successful on their reading level, they were less fearful of reading and began to read more often. Borkowski (1987) stated that without high self-esteem, both children and adults are less likely to employ strategies for learning. As self-esteem and self-efficacy increase, the fear to use strategies deceases. As students increase their self-esteem, they will become better members of a community as well as better members of an academic class. Therefore, it seemed important to develop a strategy that would allow students to experience success, and some fun, while learning.

Read, Imagine, Decide, and Do (RIDD): steps of the Strategy

After looking at the behaviors of students, and finding some commonalities, the steps of RIDD began to emerge. Since students who are on lower reading levels than their peers often experience difficulty even within that level, the first decision was to make RIDD a strategy that would increase students' reading *efficiency*. As noted earlier, when students experience success, they are likely to incorporate more efficient learning strategies. Therefore, the first step, **R**, is **read the passage from the first capital to the**

last end mark *without stopping.* This was based on Garner's (1991) observation that rapid, accurate, and automatic decoding reduces memory demands for word identification, releasing memory resources for construction of meaning. Of course, rapid decoding is not the only key to good reading. As Garner continued, decoding does not ensure that meaning will be constructed successfully. There are certainly other factors that produce comprehension failure. Anderson (1985) noted, however, when children who are just learning to read engage in particularly effortful, inefficient decoding, their comprehension is inevitably hampered.

Reading without stopping is important. That means the students will need to decide, ahead of time, what they will call a word that is foreign to them. It is important to note here, that to begin this strategy, students must be at their independent level of reading. That is, the level in which they experience the greatest amount of success. When this is the starting place, there will be few words that students do not know. Also, the context cues will be strong enough to assist the students in constructing meaning within the passage. Good readers often skip words within a text and continue reading. Some readers have a "pet word" they insert. For instance, some good readers will use "Whatever", or "Big word". This may be easier than just leaving an empty space. Deciding what to do about an unknown word before reading begins also allows students to have some power over their own learning.

It is important that the students have a concept of how much will be read before it is time to stop. Actually saying, or thinking, "I'm going to read from the first capital to the last end mark." helps students focus on the entire task rather than just one line at a time. This is especially relevant in reading directions or test items. The teacher may decide, at first, how much a student will read before going on to the next step. Then, as students become more proficient, that decision becomes their own.

The second step **I** is **imagine or make a mental picture of what you have read.** A number of researchers have examined visual imagery as a learning strategy (Hodges, 1992; Darch & Simpson, 1990; Mastropieri, 1988; Levin, 1983; Peters & Levin, 1986). They indicated that visual imagery has the potential for assisting students with learning disabilities. However, as Darch and Simpson (1990) found, visual imagery alone, when teaching rural students with learning disabilities is not effective. Teaching explicit rules for learning information must not be ignored. Therefore, even though imagery is effective, and sometimes, fun, it is only a part of the teaching-learning process.

This step has two purposes. One is to assist students focus on the concept and to provide a self-monitoring procedure. If a student is reading directions for the completion of an exercise in language arts and cannot imagine what his or her paper will look like, comprehension of the text has not occurred. When first presenting this step, the teacher needs to explain that everyone has difficulty sometimes. Students can decide, ahead of time, what to do if they cannot make a mental picture of what they read. As Brown (1980) noted, when comprehension failure is noted, it is considered to be metacognitive success. If children do not notice that they are not understanding text information, they are unlikely to seek a strategic remedy (Garner, 1987).

The third step, **D, decide what to do,** first emerged because of math word problems. When students read the entire problem without stopping and got a mental picture of the situation, they could decide what to do and in what order the steps were to be completed. In reading directions, students looked through to see exactly what they were supposed to do. In reading content areas, if students did imagine the meaning, they could decide to continue reading.

The fourth step is **D-do the work.** Once again, this step emerged through math word problems and extended to other content areas. It is during this step that the students actually do what was decided upon in the third step. Often, students would attempt to read a problem and want to immediately start writing down numbers. By adding the last step, they can see that there are things that can be done in between reading and writing that lead to success. It is interesting to note here that as students used RIDD when doing math problems, they often commented that they liked it because only the last step that had any work involved. This seems to lend support to the idea that students with learning disabilities do not consider metacognitive processes important; rather, they only see the written product as evidence of successful learning.

The following is a report of an ongoing study in which the subjects are rural secondary students identified as students with learning disabilities in a Southeastern state. The main purpose of the study is to determine if the use of Read, Imagine, Decide and Do strategy will effect the academic performance of these students in one grading period. The discussion will include the methods, procedures, and results obtained over a three week period. The discussion will include the methods and procedures as well as present some results from preliminary data that has been obtained from the teachers who are using the strategy.

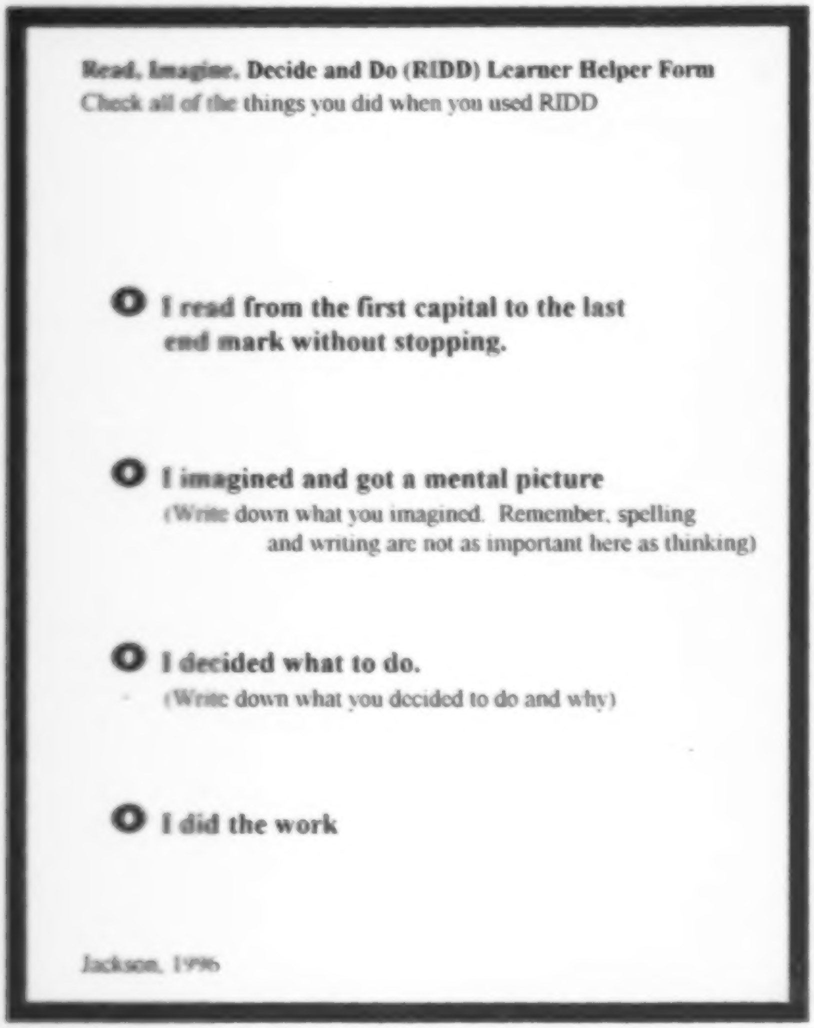
Methods and Procedures

The researcher provided the two teachers who volunteered to participate in the study with a one hour training session in which the researcher and the teachers examined the scripting of the RIDD strategy. The investigator answered any questions the teachers had and provided modeling on how to integrate the steps of RIDD into regular instruction.

The teachers, who instruct students with learning disabilities or students with mild mental retardation, chose the students to participate. Five females and nine males, ranging in age from 13 to 19 and in IQ from 60 to 72 make up classroom A (n = 14). The age range of the students in the other classroom , B (n = 6), is form 10 to 13 and the IQ ranges from 70 to 93. All of the students in classroom B are male.

The teachers introduced the strategy to the students in one fifteen minute session and began modeling the steps during regular daily instruction. In the second lesson, the teachers demonstrated how to use the strategy for reading directions. In the third lesson, the teachers illustrate how to use RIDD in content areas of the curriculum. In lessons four and five, the teachers provided guided and independent practice. The teachers encourage the students to use the strategy in other classrooms and examine the Learner Helper Forms (see Figure 1). Presently, the students are involved in the independent practice stage of strategy instruction.

Figure 1 The Learner Helper Form



Read, Imagine, Decide and Do (RIDD) Learner Helper Form
Check all of the things you did when you used RIDD

○ **I read from the first capital to the last end mark without stopping.**

○ **I imagined and got a mental picture**
(Write down what you imagined. Remember, spelling and writing are not as important here as thinking)

○ **I decided what to do.**
(Write down what you decided to do and why)

○ **I did the work**

Jackson, 1996

Preliminary Results

The reported data was taken after three weeks. This data must be considered inconclusive because it does not include an entire grading period. In classroom A, the students' mean score at the beginning of the six weeks was 71.5. After three weeks, the mean score was 85.4. This did provide a significant difference in a one tailed τ-test; however, no data on the control group were available. In classroom B, the mean score was 77.8 and the post mean was 79.4. That teacher did provide data from a control group. The students in the control are matched with the students in the experimental group on the basis of age, IQ, and classes in the general education setting. Two male students compose the control. Neither of the members of the control had any statistically significant change in academic performance over the three week period. Even though the entire mean differences between the control and experimental group did not indicate a significant gain, one of the scores form the experimental group did show a significant positive change ($\alpha = .05$).

The researcher also obtained qualitative data. The teachers who are using the strategy stated that the students are more motivated while they are in the resource room setting. They noted that students are showing more interest in the texts and completing more assignments. Additionally, one teacher reported that one of her students said he liked the strategy because he did not always have to think exactly the way the teacher did to make sense of some of his assignments. Further evidence of the usefulness of RIDD is indicated in that other teachers in the school have expressed interest in using the strategy with their students who have not been identified as having learning problems, but are having difficulty in the general education setting.

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Dr. Veronica Gold
Dr. Ellen Williams
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, OH 43403
Ms. Elissa Stowers
Dr. Gary Dutey
Pilasco-Ross SERRC
Portsmouth, OH 45662

TRANSITION TO THE COMMUNITY, WORK, AND INDEPENDENT LIVING: THE RURAL COMMUNITY AS A CLASSROOM

Introduction

Super (1990) defines transition as a lifelong process involving not only the individual, but her or his family and the community. According to Szymanski (1994), successful transition programs are based on the following principles: a) Contributions and participation of people with disabilities in the community- are valued; b) transition programs must be "owned" by the community; c) Transition programs should reflect the community's strengths and address its needs. Thus, transition programs should not result in the victimization of individuals and their families (Nisbet, Covert, & Schuh, 1992), but should promote their active decision-making.

To be "owned" by the community and reflective of its strengths and needs, natural rural community characteristics leading to the empowerment of families, and students with disabilities must be identified and utilized (Szymanski, 1994). Characteristics of rural communities perceived as major strengths have been identified as; a) cohesiveness and strong kinship ties (Finley, 1994), b) social capital or the caring of one individual for others (Coleman, 1988). Helge (1992) points to the following rural strengths or characteristics based on her research in rural schools; a)a unique "community spirit," b) a "personalized environment," c) greater percentages of community resources allocated to educational and other social services, and d) valuing of independence and local control.

Conversely, rural communities are confronted by formidable barriers which may inhibit the development of strong transitional training programs. Among those barriers cited in the literature are: a) limited financial resources (Carlson, 1993), b) long-term poverty (Stern, 1992), c) long-term economic decline (Carlson, 1992), d) distance and other geographic barriers (Helge, 1992), and e) limited availability of technical and human resources (Helge). Despite these problematic barriers, the sense of community which exists in rural locations has been cited as the single critical element leading to a quality educational experience for rural students.

Project CREST

Both the strengths and weaknesses of rural communities were factored into the development of a graduate level training program for rural special educators called Project CREST (Collaboration in Rural Education for Special Teachers). Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, Project CREST provided training stipends annually to 10 bachelors level teachers certified in special education. These 10 CREST participants worked with a class of rural students with disabilities in teams of two for a total of five teams and classes. In addition to teaching in the rural classrooms for one academic year, these special educators/CREST participants completed a field-based masters degree training program over three semesters. Training goals for CREST participants were to effectively meet the academic, social, vocational and ancillary service needs of rural students with special needs. In addition, Project CREST directors developed goals to improve the quality of training to rural special education preservice trainees, and to assist in the recruitment and retention of teaching personnel specifically trained for rural special education settings.

To achieve these goals, Project CREST participants completed the following courses during the three semester program; Foundations and Instructional Strategies for Rural Special Education, Problems and Issues for Personnel in Rural Special Education, Collaboration I and II for Related Educational Services, Practicum I and II in Rural Special Education, and Staff Development and Peer Mentoring in Rural Special Education among others. Embedded into these collective courses were the following concepts and competencies for rural special educators related to community-based training for transition developed and disseminated by Marrs (1984).

- understanding of the context of a rural school and its environment
- knowledge concerning the state-of-the-art of rural special education
- understanding the differences involved in serving students with disabilities in rural and urban environments
- knowledge of effective service delivery models for rural students with disabilities
- awareness of alternate resources to provide services to rural students with disabilities and skills to identify alternate resources
- skills in working with citizens and agencies in rural communities to facilitate cooperation among schools and service agencies serving students with disabilities
- understanding of personal development skills for professional growth and to build a local support system in the rural community
- skills in working with parents of rural students with disabilities
- skills in working with peer professionals from rural environments

Further, practicum experiences within the Project CREST training sequence were designed to enhance the development of these skills related to community-based training for transition:

- development of vocational training sequences based on an analysis of local community employment needs
- application of behavioral analysis procedures to academic and vocational training sequences for students
- application of appropriate consultation and communication principles with peers and community members
- application of appropriate consultation and communication principles with parents
- ability to select and adapt academic materials based on students' age, interests, training needs,
- ability to used regular and special education curricula for program planning
- application of alternative teaching methodologies and accommodation strategies
- ability to provide age appropriate social skill training to students
- ability to apply federal and state mandates for the education of students with disabilities

Community Demographics

With regard to Project CREST participants serving rural adolescents with disabilities, those concepts and competencies focusing on skill development in working with citizens and agencies, the construction of a local support system, and the development of vocational training sequences based on local community needs were of significant importance in using the rural community as a training site. CREST participants ere challenged to apply these competencies to construct transition experiences for rural students in an impoverished region of Ohio.

The rural geographic region served by Project CREST was a four-county region of southern Ohio within the Appalachian region of the United States. As illustrated in Table 1, approximately two-thirds of all employment opportunities were either in the retail or service sectors with unemployment rates above the national average and per capita income and percentage of high school graduates below the national average (U.S. Census Bureau, 1996).

(Insert Table 1 about here.)

Table 1

Selected Employment and Demographic Statistics of Counties Served by Project Crest Compared with Franklin County

County	Percent Unemployed	Percent Retail Business	Percent Service Business	Percent H.S. Graduates	Per Capita Income
Franklin	3.9	24.0	38.2	81	$21,547
Lawrence	6.9	30.7	33	65.9	$14,400
Pike	10.6	32.6	31.8	60.8	$13,895
Ross	6.5	30.3	35.1	67.6	$15,215
Scioto	9.4	31.0	36.3	63.8	$14,152

In-school Transition Initiatives

As indicated earlier, CREST participants were prompted to engage parents, agencies, and community businesses in planning and implementing transition activities.

Further, the staff of the Pilasco-Ross Special Education Regional Resource Center and Project CREST faculty developed related training models to support participants' acquisition of critical knowledge and skills. One such module, Extending Practice Into Classrooms (EPIC) focused on infusing employability skills training into classroom activities. Within EPIC, suggested activities and employment skills were clustered into eight categories as illustrated in Figure 1.

(Insert Figure 1 about here.)

Figure 1. Eight Clusters of Employability Skills

Cluster Area	Related Skills
Employability Self-Help Skills	Demonstrates personal hygiene and good grooming; dresses appropriately; travels independently; communicates effectively
General Work Habits	Attends regularly/arrives on time; stays on task; works independently
Task Related Skills	Cares for tools, materials, and work area
Quantity of Work	Completes work on time; exhibits stamina; adapts to increased demands in work load
Quality of Work	Makes appropriate choices and decisions; recognizes and corrects mistakes
Relationship to Supervisor	Accepts constructive criticism from supervisor; follows directions from supervisor; seeks help when needed
Work Attitudes	Develops and seeks personal goals; shows initiative; accepts societal values and rewards; takes pride in work
Relationship to Peers	Works cooperatively with peers; Shows respect for rights and property of peers; uses appropriate language and manners with peers

Course content for Project CREST participants addressed curriculum initiatives, techniques, and activities related to students' attainment of employment and independent living competencies across subject areas. Further, practicum assignments prompted CREST participants to utilize this knowledge to synthesize their students' academic skill needs with these transitional skills. For example, if a student's Individualized Educational Plan included oral language goals, a special education teacher enrolled in Project CREST might provide lessons and training on taking accurate phone messages or interviewing supervisors at community job sites.

Community-based Initiatives

These Project CREST participants developed transitional programs both within the traditional educational setting, and the broader classroom of the community through networks with parents, agencies, and community businesses. For example, one Project CREST participant was able to arrange for several of her students to shadow manicurists at the salon where she had her hair styled. Still other of these rural students had practicum experiences with employees working in inventory and purchasing departments at a small community hospital. Yet another exemplary example of a Project CREST participant's skill in applying professional transitional competencies may be illustrated through Joey's story.

Joey was an 18 year old senior high school student with profound deafness. He was a member of a family of five; two parents, one sister, and one brother. All other family members were hearing, but Joey would be the first to graduate from high school. He told his teacher, Mrs. Green, that he wanted to be a carpenter.

While a Project CREST Participant, Mrs. Green tried to advocate for Joey's admission into the construction trades program at the local vocational high school. but that staff found a way to prevent Joey's enrollment there. Next, Mrs. Green contacted the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), but counselors there passed off her requests for training assistance for Joey from case worker to supervisor to director. Phone calls from Mrs. Green to the BVR weren't returned, and time was passing.

Mrs. Green contacted a community volunteer, Mr. Riley, whom she had met when she taught the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) volunteers some sign language. Mr. Riley owned a small construction business and offered to allow Joey to work at constructions sites during several afternoons each week.

To assist Joey and Mr. Riley to have a successful experience, Mrs. Green visited the construction site where Joey would work to obtain language samples of common words and phrases. Next, she made a videotape of the signs used to express this construction vocabulary for Mr. Riley and taught Joey these signs in the classroom as a normal part of the curriculum. A variety of individuals helped Joey travel to and from his training site while he learned to drive. At graduation, Mrs. Green, with others of Joey's teachers bought him a set of tools as his graduation gift. Mr. Riley employed Joey as a laborer in his construction business, and Joey, with diploma and driver's license in hand, accomplished a critical step in the transition process. He told Mrs. Green his next goal was to buy a car.

Summary

The success of the transitional curriculum and community collaborative initiatives implemented by Project CREST participants was based on their achievement of goals, knowledge, and competencies developed for special educators serving rural students with disabilities. Further, these special educators' ability to infuse an employability curriculum into daily instruction combined with the development of community-based training sites led to more varied transitional training options, improved student motivation, and opportunity for the development of entrepreneurial skills among students with disabilities.

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Catherine Medina, Ph.D.
Center for Excellence in Education
Northern Arizona University
P.O. Box 5774
Flagstaff, Arizona 86011-5774
catherine.medina@nau.edu

Suicidal Behaviors and Factors Related to Suicide Among Mexican American Youth Identified As Seriously Emotionally Disturbed in Rural Settings

Introduction

After having been both a special educator and special education counselor in the public schools working with children and adolescents identified as SED, I came to realize the need for students to have access to appropriate interventions and an avenue in which to seek help when they are in crisis. It has been my experience from working with troubled children and adolescents that many have felt emotionally abandoned by the school system. The stigmatism that *special education* placement may bring along with a diagnosis *of emotionally disturbed* left many of our school-aged adolescents relegated to a demeaned social status at school. These feelings of abandonment coupled with the everyday stressors of normal developmental processes (e.g., peer bonding and socialization, sexual development and orientation) left some adolescents in special education without the appropriate defenses to deal with these issues or the social capital to know how to seek safe interventions.

The majority of children and youth I worked with suffered from a variety of problems such as depression, sexual abuse, physical abandonment, psychiatric histories, physical abuse, and repeated academic failure. Many of these students were substance abusers, while others were more immediate in their self-abuse (e.g., cutting themselves with razors, burning their arms with lit cigarettes, sexual promiscuity). As a special educator I became aware of students' suicidal wishes. Frequently, suicide attempts were made when an adolescent was depressed or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

It is my absolute belief that all school-aged youth are in desperate need of a comprehensive school intervention program that addresses factors related to suicide and suicidal thoughts. At the very least, teachers need to become aware of how to identify and refer students who may be at-risk for suicidal behaviors. It is also my absolute belief that student voices need to be heard in a holistic manner. Students do not come to school compartmentalized and fragmented and able to leave their home life, peer life, and pain at the school door. Educators must look at children from the context from which they evolve.

The purposes of the study

The primary purposes of this study were to explore, both quantitatively and qualitatively: (a) the prevalence of suicidal thoughts among Mexican American youth enrolled in special education classes for SED, (b) the prevalence of depression among Mexican American adolescents identified as SED, and (c) teacher, parent, and student experiences and knowledge of suicidal thoughts or suicidal behaviors among adolescents identified as SED.

Setting

Texas has been cited as one of four states with the largest numbers of non-English speaking populations in the United States. New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and California have the highest percentage of Hispanics within their population. This study was conducted in two rural school districts adjacent to Mexico, (a) Capote Independent School District in Capote, Texas; and (b) Antonio Independent School District in Antonio, New Mexico. Fictitious names have been used in identifying both school districts. Both southwest communities have large Mexican American populations and are within 5-25 miles from the U.S.-Mexico border. Additionally, in both rural communities farming is the primary industry followed by construction and mining. Unemployment rates for the two rural areas average over 8%.

The Personnel Office within the Capote Independent School District reported an enrollment of 400 students in special education, with 98% of these students identified as Hispanic during the 1994 academic year. The Personnel Office in Antonio, New Mexico reported a special education enrollment of 570, with 92% of this student population identified as Hispanic. In both communities, the overwhelming majority of students are from Mexican American backgrounds. Placement of Hispanics in special education is reflective of the total school population.

Instruments

The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI; Beck, 1993) was administered to 31 adolescents enrolled in 1 of the 6 targeted special education classes for students with severe emotional disturbances. The BDI is a 21-item test presented in a multiple choice format. It is intended to assess cognitive, affective, and somatic components of depression in adolescents and adults. Each question provided for a Likert-type response of 0 to 3. A zero response meant the depressive symptom was not present and a 3 response meant the symptom was severe. The total BDI score was the sum of the individual items. Total scores can range from 0 to 63.

The Personal Experience Screening Questionnaire (PESQ, Winters, 1991) was administered to 31 adolescents enrolled in 1 of the 6 targeted special education classes for students with severe emotional disturbances. The PESQ consists of three parts and is intended to aid service providers in the identification of drug abuse in teenagers. Part I contains 21 questions, 18 of which deal with drug involvement and 3 questions address items relative to faking-bad response tendencies. Items 1-21 are presented on a Likert-type scale ranging from *never* to *often*. Part II contains 8 psychosocial items that are relative to problems common in chemically abusive adolescents, with an additional 5 items that address faking-good tendencies. These items are presented in a *yes* and *no* format. Part III contains 6 items which deal with drug use history. These items asked the subjects to indicate how many times they have used a specific drug. Problem severity varies according to the subjects age and sex.

Interview Process

Eight of the 31 students and all six teachers were selected to participate in an indepth interview process. Students and teachers were interviewed three times each. Student selections were based on class volunteers. Students were told the purpose of the study and asked to volunteer. Students were given a copy of the Information for Participants and asked to read it. The researcher also read it to the student and asked if he/she had any questions. It was believed that if students knew the purpose of the study, they would be able to make informed decisions regarding their own participation. In cases where there was only one female in a classroom, the female was asked to participate. Since females in classes for severe emotional disturbances are few, it seemed *critical* to interview them.

Research Questions and Annotated Findings

1. For the population of Mexican American students (age range 13 -18) enrolled in special education classes for SED, what is the prevalence of suicidal thoughts? Of the 8 students interviewed, 4 students had attempted suicide and 3 students had stated that they thought about suicide in times of stress. Results of the BDI also indicated that at least 10 of the 31 students who volunteered to take the BDI indicated feelings of hopelessness or a desire to kill themselves. These are two primary indicators of suicide potential.

2. For the population of Mexican American students (age range 13 -18) enrolled in special education classes for SED, what is the prevalence of depression? All eight students interviewed stated that they had suffered from profound sadness in the past, with two students admitting current depression. BDI scores revealed that 16 of the 31 students scored in the moderate to severe range for depression.

3. For the population of Mexican American students (age range 13-18) enrolled in special education classes for SED, what is the prevalence of substance abuse? Of the 8 students interviewed, only 1 student stated that he was a current abuser of drugs and alcohol. Results of the PESQ indicate that 10 of the 31 students received scores which may signal problem use of drugs or alcohol.

4. What knowledge and experience do students, parents, and special education teachers have relative to suicide? As indicated before, 4 of the 8 students interviewed had attempted suicide in the past, with an additional three students indicating suicidal thoughts in the past. Of the 8 students interviewed, 4 stated that they had friends who had attempted suicide. Nearly all special education teachers interviewed stated that they had experiences with student suicide attempts or students verbalizing suicidal thoughts. One teacher shared as many as eight examples of students who had attempted suicide. Only one parent had knowledge of suicidal behaviors.

5. What role does social and interpersonal conflict play in suicidal thoughts among Mexican American adolescents enrolled in classes for SED? Of the eight students interviewed, all students reported social and interpersonal conflict, both at home and at school. Social and interpersonal conflict manifested itself in an inability to get along with family members, teachers, and peers. Of the five male participants, all had a history of violence and aggression.

6. What role do family dynamics play in suicidal thoughts among Mexican American adolescents enrolled in classes for SED? All students interviewed stated family problems as a primary factor to their placement into special education. Familial distress consisted of physical abuse, emotional abuse, psychological abandonment, spousal violence, aggression in the home, scapegoating of one child in the family, and substance abuse. For the four students who attempted suicide, family problems were seen as a primary factor associated with their attempt.

7. What role do personal attitudes toward school play in suicidal thoughts among Mexican American adolescents enrolled in classes for SED? Of the eight students interviewed, the majority of students felt that regular education teachers did not value them on a personal level, with all of the students stating that they wanted a teacher who would listen to them and care about them. For the majority of the students interviewed, school prior to placement into special education, was a painful experience.

8. What role does special education placement play in suicidal thoughts among Mexican American adolescents enrolled in classes for SED? With the exception of two students, all of the students interviewed felt that special education had contributed positively to their emotional and psychological development. Two of the six students no longer saw special education placement as positive. Longevity in the program may have influenced theses students' attitudes toward placement. Those stating the most positive attitudes toward special education had been in the program for less than one year. It seems that special education placement for students with emotional problems may reach a point of saturation and the program goals prove ineffective after a period of time.

Integrated Discussion of Findings

Students interviewed shared their stories as to how they came to be students enrolled in special education classes for severe emotional disturbance. All students indicated distressed family systems as primary contributors to their behavioral and emotional problems. Results of the interview data indicates that 4 of the 8 students attempted suicide. Three of the students that attempted suicide required psychiatric hospitalization prior to placement into special education. An additional three students said that they had thought about suicide in times of stress. The eight interviewed students represented six special education classrooms in rural New Mexico. Given these high numbers of suicide attempts, it becomes suspect as to the whether this is a representative sample of other classrooms serving high numbers of Mexican American youth in rural settings.

What is especially interesting is that 3 of the 4 students who attempted suicide were female. Further, all females interviewed had attempted suicide within the past two years. Female students stated primary factors associated with their attempted suicide was incest, rape, and severe distress in the home. These findings may suggest that the prevalence of sexual abuse among females in classes for SED warrants further investigation. It is well-documented in the literature that sexual abuse is associated with self-destructive behaviors and possible diminished cognitive functioning. If placement into special education is intended to provide therapeutic interventions, special educators must consider the impact that sexual abuse and suicidal behaviors have on an adolescent's perception of everyday reality.

Another issue that became prevalent along gender lines is the type of depressive features manifested by males and females. All five males interviewed had a history of violence and aggression. The literature often associates these types of behaviors with a type of depression known as "masked depression." This type of depression is one of the most prevalent types of depression in children and adolescents. Most violent and aggressive behaviors in the male students stemmed from feelings of abandonment and severe familial problems. Of the male students, 4 of the 5 males described feelings of emotional and psychological abandonment by primary adults in their lives. Possibly, for the male adolescent who is "acting out" aggressively, schools may refer these students to alternative school placements without the benefit of appropriate identification. Consequently, these children are may be seen as "conduct disordered" as opposed to children with emotional problems.

Substance abuse was evident in 2 of the 5 male students' households and in 1 of the 3 female households. This substance abuse often became a precursor to verbal and physical abuse between family members, with 2 of the 5 males and 1 of the 3 females detailing extreme violence in their homes. Surprisingly, only one male student stated that he was a current user of substances. Of the remaining 4 males, however, 2 stated that they were past abusers of substances. No female stated having had current substance abuse problems.

Females described their depressive features as feelings of extreme sadness, crying, and anxiety. Even though these are typical characteristics of depressive symptoms, it took 2 of the 3 females attempting suicide and psychiatric hospitalization before they were placed into special education. This finding may imply that boys who are acting out are the first to receive appropriate intervention and that females must take more drastic measures to receive needed intervention.

In the homes of all eight students, families were in need of intervention. All families had problems which consisted of one or more of the following: substance abuse, physical abuse, verbal abuse, spousal violence, scapegoating of children, physical abandonment, and emotional abandonment. In many cases, students stated that their families modeled the aggressive and violent behaviors that they later used as a means of solving conflict. It would seem that in order for adolescents to receive healthy intervention, the families must also be a part of that therapeutic intervention. In only 1 of the 6 targeted schools was there active school intervention for the families of students identified as SED. In two other cases, the researcher was made aware that families were seeking community mental health services.

Interview data revealed that students were well-aware of suicide and factors associated with the suicidal youth. Of the 8 students interviewed, 4 knew of another adolescent who had attempted suicide. The interviewed students cited depression, family conflict, difficulty with developmental transitions, physical abuse, and feelings of abandonment as major factors associated with attempted suicide. Interestingly, all the adolescents interviewed cited depression as prevalent among school-aged youth. Suicide was also seen as a way to end problems, primarily family problems. What was also evident and of concern is that students were often placed in situations where they provided assistance to their suicidal peers. Of the 8 students interviewed, 2 described situations where they actually intervened in their friend's suicide attempt. This is a great burden to place on peers whose own development leaves them unprepared to face such a crisis. No student interviewed sought the help of an adult in times of suicidal crisis. This may mean that students do not view adults, including school personal, as someone they can go to in a time of need.

The role the school played in augmenting or abating existing suicidal thoughts and behaviors was addressed. From data obtained from the interviews, it was evident that special education for at least 6 of the 8 students provided a safety net. Students stated that they felt that the relationship they had with their teacher was most instrumental in their own positive transformations. The interviewed students who indicated positive relationships with their teachers stated that their teacher was trustworthy, empathic, genuine, respectful, and saw students as individuals. For these students, teachers were seen as a confidant and someone who they could trust with day-to-day problems. It was not evident that these students would, however, seek assistance from their teachers for suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Students who stated a positive relationship with their teacher also enjoyed a more integrated school day where they were encouraged by their teachers to join in school activities.

For the two students who disliked their special education placement, the male student had been in special education for approximately 6 years and the female student had been in special education for approximately 2 years. Both of these students saw their special education placement as punitive rather than restorative. These students were required to "earn" privileges such as walking down the hall alone. Both of these students also saw their placement as offering little flexibility and freedom. This finding may imply that students are seeking interventions based on more humanistic models of classroom instruction as opposed to strict behavioral modification models.

Special education teachers, like students, saw the teacher role in the classroom as more humanistic in nature. All special education teachers stated that they sought to engage the students on a personal as well as academic level. They also indicated that they were in consistent contact with students who had suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Of the 31 students screened in the areas of depression and substance abuse, 18 students received scores on the BDI in the moderate to severe range for depression and 10 students received scores which may signal problem use of drugs or alcohol on the PESQ. There appears to be a critical need for a more thorough investigation into adolescent depression and substance abuse. As alarming, 12 of the 31 students indicated feelings of hopelessness and/or thoughts of killing themselves.

Special education teachers found themselves in situations where they were expected to counsel suicidal adolescents without the benefit of appropriate training or referral knowledge. Only two special education teachers stated that they had had formal training in the area of suicide. With regard to a school policy relative to suicide intervention two special education teachers knew of a formal policy. The remaining special education teachers created their own policy with the help of school counselors or school psychologists. What is dangerous is that many of the special education teacher interviewed felt alone in helping students out of difficult crisis situations.

Finally, information obtained from the parent group revealed that parents of young adolescents saw their children as having typical behavioral problems as opposed to severe emotional disturbances. When interviewed as a group, parents indicated that they saw their children as suffering from periods of sadness with few mentioning depression. Only one parent indicated that she felt her child was at a possible risk for self-abusive behaviors. It should be noted that the parents who were interviewed as a group had no contact with the interviewer prior to the interview. Consequently, information yielded did not entail the depth and richness as received in the student and teacher interviews. Possible explanations: (a) parents were suspect of the interviewer, because the interviewee had not formed a prior relationship, (b) parents were reluctant to speak about personal family issues in a group, or (c) parents may have preferred speaking to the interviewer on a one-to one basis. In any cases, it is recommended that this study be replicated utilizing one-to-one interviews with the parents and following the three interview format.

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Dr. Patricia J. Peterson
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, AZ 86011

A RURAL MULTICULTURAL TRAINING COLLABORATIVE

Significance of the Rural Multicultural Training Collaborative

The Rural Multicultural Training Collaborative (RMTC) program meets the local and national need for certified special education professionals in rural areas by: a) training a total of 60 baccalaureate special educators with dual certification in Special Education and Elementary Education for service in rural America who will be prepared to work with Native American and Hispanic children and parents, b) providing this training in remote and multicultural settings thus fully preparing the trainees for the realities of rural work with culturally and linguistically diverse students, and c) by focusing on collaborative and inclusive methods of delivering special education services thus meeting the intent of the least restrictive environment clause of I.D.E.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

The RMTC program is a training collaboration in special education between Northern Arizona University and local school districts in the Yuma and Tuba City areas. Its purpose is to train special education teachers to deliver high quality services to linguistically and culturally diverse students in rural areas. There are numerous areas in which the RMTC program differs from traditional programs: it is a field-based program, the classes are taken one at a time (consecutively not concurrently), the participants are a cohort group (students move through the program together), there are built-in support personnel (counselors and tutors), classroom practicums are concurrent with classes, each participant completes 19 hours in a semester, and local teacher assistants are able to continue to work since all classes start after their work day ends.

RMTC is a special **field-based** program providing training experiences in multicultural education, rural education, and principles of inclusion directed by Dr. Patricia Peterson. The importance of distance education is rapidly being discovered. Field-based professors, traveling guest lecturers, and Instructional Interactive Television (IITV) are all new ways to overcome the barriers rural students often face in accessing higher education. In addition, rural students, particularly underrepresented groups often have difficulties juggling jobs, kids, classes, etc. RMTC addresses this difficulty by changing the nature of the classroom. Classes are taken by the same group of students, a **cohort group**. These classes are taken **consecutively** not concurrently so that each class can have each student's complete attention. The **practicum** is done concurrently so that all of the information covered in the classes can be directly applied and reinforced. With the addition of **tutors** and **counselors** each of the students can have individual assistance before problems arise. Through the RMTC program it has been found that through these non-traditional methods even students who had difficulties carrying 2 to 3 classes in the traditional manner were able to complete 19 credits per semester with an A/B average.

The RMTC program trains teachers for **culturally/linguistically diverse populations**. Each student has over 600 hours of classroom experience in rural areas. By living in the rural areas, the RMTC students become aware first hand of the difficulties facing culturally/linguistically diverse populations as well as techniques and skills to assist learning for these populations. RMTC also creates a learning environment that encourages collaboration with administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the community to discuss the benefits and challenges of a culturally/linguistically diverse population and learning environment. In addition, the program works with rural paraprofessionals who, due to time, distance and finances, are not able to attend the university to become certified. As participants in the RMTC program, they will receive all the classes necessary for certification in elementary and special education in their community.

Learner-centered Improvements

The RMTC program changes the traditional classroom and brings it to the learner's (student's) community. Participants in this non-traditional cohort group received an average GPA of 3.4, and there was a 100% retention rate of Native American students located in Tuba City and a 93% retention rate of Hispanic students located in Yuma. All RMTC participants are evaluated and compared to their counterparts on the traditional campus in traditional programs.

By using non-traditional teaching methods through distance field-based learning, the program works to assist students who are working, taking classes, and often raising families. The RMTC program recruits from local school districts for teacher assistants who meet the admission criteria and are interested in pursuing a teaching degree and certification. The program faculty then work with the participants to produce detailed individualized programs of study. All classes are scheduled so as not to conflict with the work day. There are many supports available to participants; tutors, counselors and an on-site professor are available to the students throughout the semester. The RMTC program has established agreements with local communities for other educational supports such as computer lab access and library access. In addition, the program has the support of local rural school districts. Teachers and administrators alike have volunteered their time and support to assist in the development of teachers who will be of great assistance to their community. Over the course of four years, sixty students will have participated in the RMTC program by completing two academic year semesters and one full summer school session. After finishing they will have taken all the classes necessary for certification in Special Education.

Training Cycles for Local Teacher Assistants and Field-based Students

This program provides training in special education for ten instructional assistants in the Tuba City area during the two Fall semesters. Ten instructional assistants in the Yuma School Districts will participate in the RMTC program during the two Spring semesters. Five NAU field based students join the instructional assistants each Fall and Spring semester. These students complete a special education practicum each morning, which entails 20 hours a week in the local schools.

The five field based students spend the Fall semester training on the Navajo reservation in Tuba City, Arizona where they attend NAU classes with ten Native American participants who work in schools on the reservation. During January, the five Field-based students and the ten Yuma teacher assistants travel to Cuernavaca, Mexico where they experience a Spanish Language Cultural Immersion Program. They attend Spanish classes at the Instituto Bilingue for 6 hours each day. In the afternoons and weekends they visit rural areas and participate in cultural activities. They live with Mexican families and learn the language and local customs. The NAU field based students then move to Yuma, Arizona for the Spring semester and attend classes with ten Hispanic teacher assistant participants. The NAU field based

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students have the unique experience of cultural immersion in both the Hispanic and Native American cultures and have opportunities to work with Hispanic and Native American students and families. The Native American and Hispanic teacher assistants in the program are able to return to their positions and also attend all the NAU special education courses.

Cultural Immersion Activities

The RMTC program trains teachers for culturally/linguistically diverse populations. Each student will have over 600 hours of classroom experience in rural areas. They become aware first hand of the difficulties facing culturally/linguistically diverse populations as well as techniques and skills to assist learning for these populations. RMTC also creates a learning environment that encourages collaboration with administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the community to discuss the benefits and challenges of a culturally/linguistically diverse population and learning environment.

The RMTC program works with future teachers to promote awareness and knowledge of diverse cultures. The RMTC program was recognized by NAU for its significant contribution to the enhancement of cultural diversity and received the President's Award for Cultural Diversity for 1995-96. Some of the cultural activities that the RMTC students participate in are:

- A Native American weekend on the Navajo Reservation. Here RMTC students learn traditional Navajo ways of living (chopping wood, hauling water, caring for livestock, preparing earthovens, openfire cooking, hogan building, plant and animal studies, traditional stories and games).

- A Havasupai Hike and Cultural Exchange. RMTC students hike to the Havasupai Reservation, visit the teachers and students at the school and participate in a cultural exchange. The RMTC students learn Hopi, Navajo, and English stories, songs, nursery rhymes, and dances (taught by individuals in the RMTC program as well as individuals assisting the program) and share them with the students in the Havasupai village. The students at the school then share their stories, songs, and dances with the visiting RMTC students.

- A Spanish Immersion program for two weeks in Cuernavaca, Mexico. RMTC students live with host families in Cuernavaca, attend classes in Spanish, visit and tour a host of landmarks, fairs, museums, and activities in Mexico.

- Participation in Migrant visits. RMTC students talk to the parents of migrant children to better understand their family dynamics as well as interact with and learn about migrant lifestyles and culture.

- Visit to a rural school in Algodones, Mexico. This interaction gave the RMTC students better insight on how schools are operated in Mexico, different teaching techniques used in the classroom, and experience in another cultural setting.

- A one day visit to an orphanage in San Luis, Mexico. RMTC students each 'adopted' one child for the day and played and cared for them. The children knew the RMTC students were coming and anxiously awaited them at the gate of the orphanage. Feedback from the RMTC students showed that out of all the cultural exchanges, this one had the most impact on the RMTC students.

In addition to the scheduled cultural activities, the participants of the RMTC program plan potlucks twice a semester where the faculty from the local school districts are invited to share in food, fun, concerns, and other related issues. The 1994/95 RMTC group even created an RMTC cookbook. The

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students are also encouraged to attend fairs, festivals, and other cultural functions to learn as much as possible from the culture in which they live.

The RMTC program increases the knowledge of culturally/linguistically diverse populations which benefits **all** students. The Native American students commented that the program increased their knowledge of their own culture through introducing it to non Native American students. Hispanic students who participate in the Spanish Immersion program benefit in the same way. (One student said she had known Spanish but had no idea of the "culture" her parents came from until she went to Mexico). Each student is provided the opportunity to experience and explore other cultures while deepening knowledge of their own culture.

Summary

As of Fall 1996, 35 students have completed the RMTC program. Of the 35 students; 17 have graduated and are teaching, 6 are completing student teaching and 12 are finishing elementary education courses. All of these students will become teachers who are much more aware of and culturally sensitive to the special needs of rural and culturally/linguistically diverse populations. From the student feedback the strengths most often mentioned about the program are the following:

1. Increased language and cultural knowledge.
2. Gaining a wide variety of skills for many types of special education settings (culturally and linguistically).
3. The partnership and collegiality with rural schools and RMTC students.
4. Direct classroom experience in a rural area.

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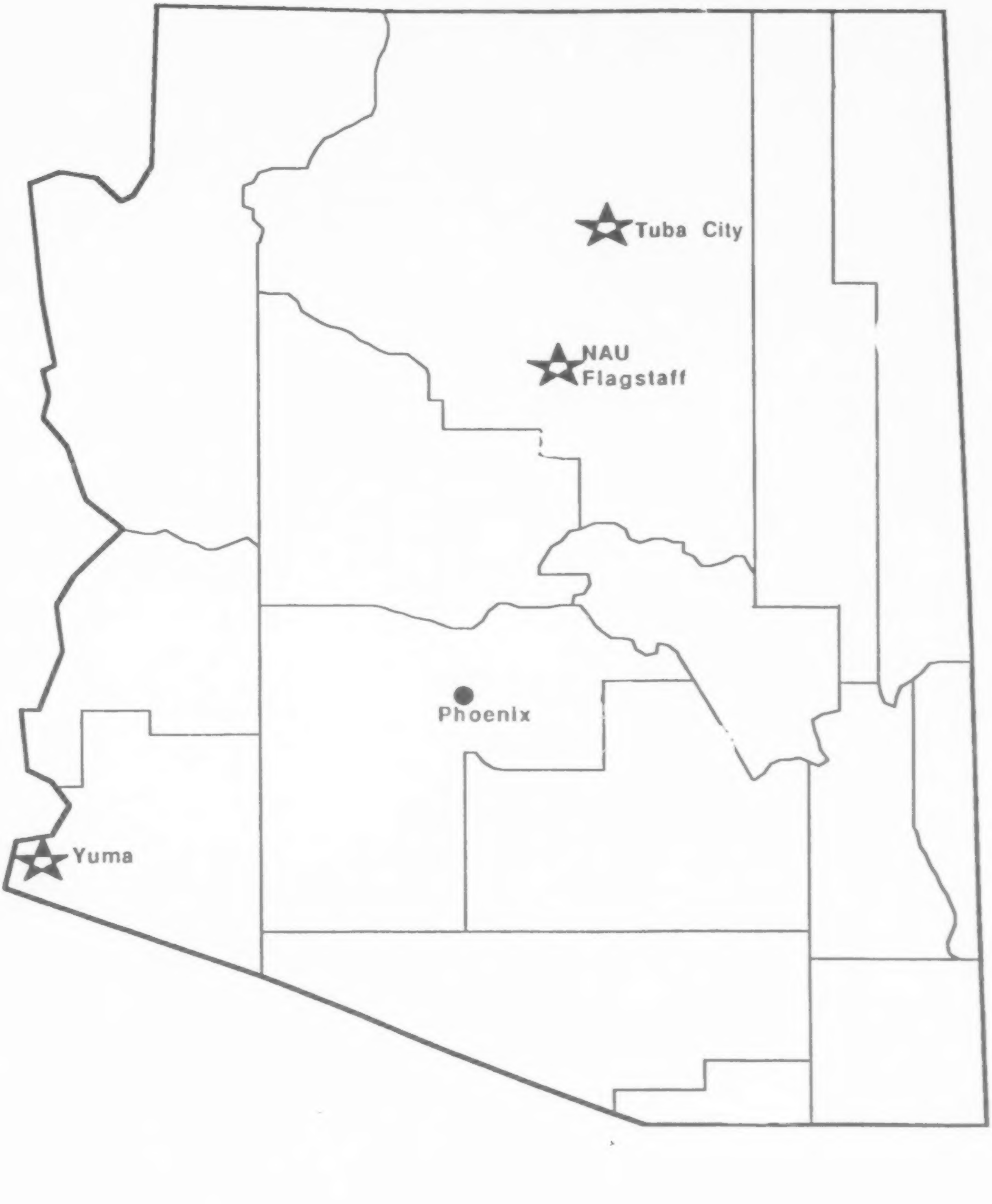
Tuba City
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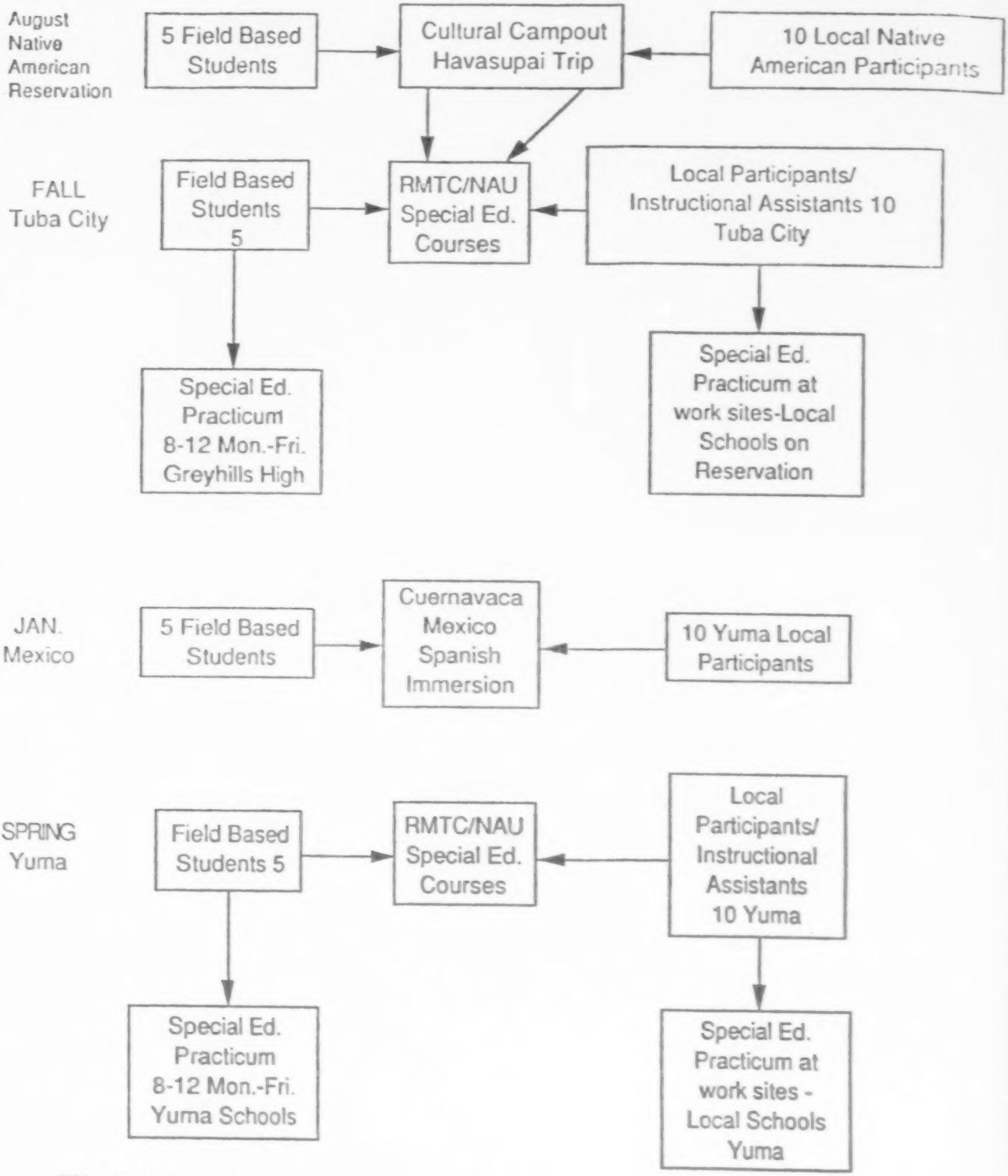
RURAL MULTICULTURAL TRAINING COLLABORATIVE


August Native American Reservation
5 Field Based Students
Cultural Campout Havasupai Trip
10 Local Native American Participants
FALL Tuba City
Field Based Students 5
RMTC/NAU Special Ed. Courses
Local Participants/ Instructional Assistants 10 Tuba City
Special Ed. Practicum 8-12 Mon.-Fri. Greyhills High
Special Ed. Practicum at work sites-Local Schools on Reservation
JAN. Mexico
5 Field Based Students
Cuernavaca Mexico Spanish Immersion
10 Yuma Local Participants
SPRING Yuma
Field Based Students 5
RMTC/NAU Special Ed. Courses
Local Participants/ Instructional Assistants 10 Yuma
Special Ed. Practicum 8-12 Mon.-Fri. Yuma Schools
Special Ed. Practicum at work sites - Local Schools Yuma

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Angie Stratton, Mary V. Compton,
Melissa Long, Maggi O'Neal, Andrea
Osman, Jennifer Smith, Rebecca Smith,
& Jennifer Wood; University Of North Carolina at
Greensboro

DESIGNING AND DELIVERING IN-SERVICE TRAINING IN HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Introduction

Boyle (1988) noted that although the highest percentage of special needs children are found in rural America, specialized personnel are fewer in number in rural areas than in urban areas. He further described teaching students who are hard of hearing who live in rural areas as both a challenge and an "awesome responsibility." (p. 134). This responsibility is indeed, significant due to the fact that 82% of all children with hearing impairments attend public schools (Davila, 1992). Consequently, it is critical that school personnel in rural education settings be knowledgeable about hearing impairments so they may enable students who are deaf and hard of hearing to fully participate in the rich educational environment offered by public school curricula and after-school activities. In facilitating this participation, regular educators must consider the academic, communicative, and social interaction aspects of deaf and hard of hearing students' school experiences. A traditional method by which regular educators continue their professional development is through in-service staff development training. Helge (1984), focusing on special education in rural areas, reported that staff development constitutes one way of providing better services for deaf and hard of hearing students (Wengerd, Hayes & Luetke-Stahlman, 1995).

In-service staff development training fills both informational and experiential voids in the continuing professional growth of regular educators as they acquire the skills to meet the needs of students with special needs. Walker (1991) defines in-service as "courses designed to provide teachers with growth in job-related competencies or skills" (p. 108). However, effective in-service development should offer content that is individualized to teachers' specific experiences and prior knowledge (Dettmer, Thurston & Dyck, 1993).

In-service Training in Hearing Impairment

According to Ross, Brackett and Maxon (1991), in-service training should be considered standard practice in designing and implementing any educational plan for a student who has a hearing loss for two reasons. The first reason emphasizes the variation of performance and potential among students with hearing impairments. Working with deaf and hard of hearing students presents decision-based incidents that require a breadth of technical, developmental, and affective information that ranges from checking hearing aids to facilitating social relationships with hearing peers. Secondly, undergraduate and graduate pre-service regular education programs cannot offer novice teachers all of the expertise they need to acquire to appropriately serve a child who has a hearing loss.

Maxon (1990) addresses the need for specific in-service training in hearing impairment through the creation of a framework for designing an Individualized In-Service Plan (IIP) for regular school personnel. A product of a six-year long mainstream project at the University of Connecticut, her outline highlights five elements: (1) professional expertise of presenter; (2) a common core of informational content; (3) inclusion of all student contact personnel; (4) involvement of a student's hearing peers; and (5) recognition of the student's family as appropriate in-service recipients. In-service needs topics derived from Maxon's survey of regular education personnel throughout the project, suggested that regular educators are particularly concerned with amplification equipment, communication options, speech and language problems, educational modifications and classroom acoustics. Subsequently, Ross, Brackett & Maxon (1991) developed in-service workshop models congruent with the identified needs. For example, a formal workshop entitled "Effects of Hearing Loss on Language" was presented to all regular education faculty of an elementary school attended by three deaf and hard of hearing students.

A Model for Designing In-service Training

The Education of Deaf Children Program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro currently receives funding to offer specialized pre-service teacher education to prepare licensed teachers in hearing impairment for rural public schools (Award #HO29A50026, US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, 1995-1998). As part of their coursework and student teaching internship, prospective teachers designed and conducted specialized in-service staff development for regular and special education teachers, staff, and classmates of deaf and hard of hearing students who attended public schools in rural settings.

Prospective teachers utilized two methods to define the informational content to be included in the in-service training modules. One method centered on designing a survey sent to regular educators in selected rural areas in North Carolina. The second method incorporated collaboration and brainstorming. In completing the survey instrument, regular educators were requested to indicate the extent of their "working knowledge" concerning items such as how to adapt instructional strategies for students with hearing impairments, how to use FM auditory trainers, and Deaf Culture. The results were tabulated and areas of most frequent lack of expertise were noted. In brainstorming, the prospective teachers considered their personal experiences from their pre-student teaching internship experiences in generating a list of possible in-service training modules. Topics derived from the survey and brainstorming included: How to Read an Audiogram, Making Classroom Modifications, Questions Commonly Asked About Teaching Deaf Students, and How to Work with an Interpreter.

Collaboration comprised an essential component of gathering information, once the topics had been determined. Each pre-service teacher researched designated topics and shared information with their colleagues. The information was gleaned from course material, textbooks, organizations affiliated with deafness, pamphlets, journals, the Internet, and master teachers.

Delivering In-service Training

The prospective teachers developed modules for one of three audiences: teachers and staff (special educators and regular educators), parents of deaf and hard of hearing students, and classmates in rural schools. Consequently, the content material gathered for the modules was adapted to meet the needs of each of these recipients. For example, information relating to Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for teachers focused on the prescriptive manner in which goals and objectives are written; whereas, IEPs for parents emphasized due process procedures. It was recognized that a classroom teacher could benefit from strategies to increase a deaf student's use of content subject vocabulary; whereas, a parent would need input regarding post-secondary educational opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing students. In-service activities for a deaf or hard of hearing student's classmates could emphasize myths associated with deafness or descriptions of sign language in order to facilitate socialization among deaf and hearing peers.

A variety of presentation strategies were employed by which the prospective teachers delivered their modules. One prospective teacher created a poster-sized audiogram with multiple colored transparent film overlays which she used as the centerpiece of her presentation. She opened the regular education faculty/staff in-service session by explaining about the different types and degrees of hearing loss and how these differences affect the classroom performance of students with hearing impairments. As she progressively displayed each overlay, she disclosed aspects of auditory perception and described how a teacher can modify instruction to accommodate the different levels of hearing loss. She also prepared printed handouts of the audiogram to serve as a reference. Another prospective teacher designed a novel way to share information about sign language and fingerspelling with a deaf student's hearing peers in an elementary setting. She constructed a board game for students to play that depicted basic sign vocabulary and fingerspelling hand configurations. In playing the game, students moved markers along a path to reach the center with cards with questions, information, and true-false statements about deafness interspersed along the journey as players landed on specific spaces.

A written evaluation instrument provided prospective teachers with feedback concerning their modules. A five point Likert scale was generated to determine to what extent recipients of the in-service activity agreed or disagreed with statements concerning the content, presenter effectiveness, use of materials, usefulness of content, and management of the activity. Prospective teachers received consistently positive evaluations which indicated that the overwhelming majority of the recipients felt the module increased their knowledge of hearing impairment.

By designing, creating, and evaluating in-service training in hearing impairment, prospective teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students in rural areas establish a network of knowledgeable persons who will ensure that deaf and hard of hearing students are fully included in a rural school community.

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Ray Nelson, Ph.D.
University of Northern Colorado
Greeley, Colorado

Lori Laughlin
Black Hills Special Services Cooperative
Sturgis, South Dakota

THE CHALLENGE OF SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION IN A RURAL STATE

Introduction

Recent educational and policy changes have pushed schools to reexamine their practices on how best to prepare students for the world of employment. President Clinton has talked persuasively about the role of education in building a bridge to the twenty-first century. Since at least 1988 educators and policy makers have focused on the process of transition from school to work and adult life for persons with special needs. Indeed, insuring a successful process of transition is seen as the key to success in employment and adult roles. School personnel, working with families and students are charged with initiating this process, being responsible for initial planning and involving appropriate adult service systems.

Post school follow-up studies have long confirmed that students with disabilities have difficulty transitioning to adult roles that include long term employment, independent living and successful community inclusion. Studies have shown that adults with disabilities are poorer, less likely to be employed and more likely to have an adequate quality of life than others (Chadsey-Rusch, 1991). Youth with disabilities drop out of school more frequently, and their rates of unemployment and under employment far exceed their non-disabled peers. Those who do graduate from secondary education earn less than their counterparts and are not able to secure long-term employment (SDAT, 1995). As an example while 80% of non-disabled students are employed two years after leaving high school, only 58% of mildly disabled students are. More striking is that while 62% of students are making more than minimum wage two years after leaving school, the rate is only 10% for mildly disabled students.

A key to success for disabled students are integrated transition services in order to facilitate the transition process. Repeated studies have shown that while individual services and schools are ready to assist individuals in the transition process, there is a lack of overall coordination between a variety of adult services for persons with special needs. Parents and students, who have become accustomed to working with schools as a single point of service are, upon graduation, faced with a thicket of service options. These services can overlap in their service area and differ in their eligibility and enrollment requirements. Coordination between services has too often been characterized by mis-communication and unnecessary delays. Often at the center of this is the inability of any one person or entity to act as a coordinator of services.

Recent federal legislation through the School to Work Opportunity Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments has recognized the need for adequate transition planning and mandated that community agencies work together to achieve positive transition outcomes. In 1990 the U.S. Department of Education began an initiative to address these systemic issues involved in the transition process. Beginning as a pilot program and spreading to all states, the Transition Systems Change grants were given to states to increase the coordination of services in the transition from school to work and build capacity within individual states to increase service coordination, enhance employment outcomes, and involve families and students in the process.

Issues Facing Rural States

Largely rural states face unique problems when addressing the transition needs of persons with disabilities leaving school. These problems stem from the nature of the rural economy and infrastructure as well as problems of serving populations over a wide geographic area (Parker, 1991). This results in fewer employment opportunities, a less diverse job market and less service options.

Rural employment conditions have changed in recent years. Most urban areas, especially in the West, have experienced dramatic economic gains in the past few years. The picture in rural America is different. Although recovery from the steep economic decline of the past decade is evident, overall economic growth has been slow. In addition, where growth has occurred it is often characterized by an expansion of lower paid and part time service jobs at the expense of higher wage jobs in mining, agriculture, oil and timber. Growth in jobs in tourism related industries is increasing while traditional rural jobs are declining (Parker, 1991). In addition, many rural states and areas are experiencing a loss of population, further exacerbating this trend. Finally many rural areas have been vulnerable to boom and bust economic cycles, raising expectations for continued economic expansion that never materializes (Dagata, 1993).

A greater problem for persons with disabilities is the lack of infrastructure necessary for delivering transition services. (Arnold, 1997). With many rural counties without public transportation, job training facilities, local community colleges, and human service specialists, individuals with disabilities have severely limited options in seeking supports to make the transition to adult roles.

Rural areas also have distinct advantages and inherent resources. Small towns of rural America allow for an increased involvement of the community in school programs. The links between local schools and local employers are easier to establish and maintain. The sense that everybody knows everyone allows for increased natural supports and family involvement. While these advantages can often feel confining to young adults, they provide and sustain close knit communities.

School to Adult Transitions Project for South Dakota

South Dakota is typical of many rural western states. Approximately 715,000 people live in a state with a land mass of 77,000 square miles. There are approximately 9 people per square mile, however 80% of the population resides in the eastern part of the state, east of the capitol of

Pierre. The rural nature of the state challenges all service providers. Harsh winters, dispersed population, isolation and rural poverty all must be taken into consideration when planning and delivering services.

The State of South Dakota, through the creation of the South Dakota Alliance for Transition (SDAT), is the state systems change project funded through the U.S. Dept. Of Education. This project establishes a formal partnership among state agencies, local service providers and community stakeholders to address the transition needs of youth with disabilities. The project is moving to enhance transition services through systems change by (1) the release of funding to four local sites to develop student and family responsive case management and integrated transition services, (2) the training of local school and agency personnel to enhance transition services, self-determination and advocacy skills, (3) convening and coordinating groups of local providers, advocates and families to implement effective transition services and effective linkage programs; and (4) by creating a network for the dissemination of timely and relevant information, materials and transition services.

This five year project has the intention of changing the focus of teachers and service providers from the short term goals of student high school graduation to the longer term goals of successful transition to adult roles for persons with disabilities. This will be accomplished through a combination of teacher training, cooperative agreements, stream lined application to services and targeted case management. Through activities at three rural and one urban pilot site, these goals will be addressed. The aim of the project is to enhance the employment opportunities and increase the quality of life for youth with disabilities by developing models of community support and integrated services.

Project Pilot Sites

Four sites were identified for the project. The sites are geographically spread across the state and entail three rural sites and one that includes the Sioux Falls area, the only urban area in the state. All of the sites encompass more than one community. The three rural sites are typical of rural areas in the mid-west and west. One site is in an area larger than Connecticut, includes sixteen school districts and twelve towns and cities with a total population of less than 30,000. The two other rural sites reflect the large geographic area and low population density typical of the rural west.

One of the advantages of a state like South Dakota is that the service systems are relatively small. In an early planning meeting, Department of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, local service providers, protection and advocacy groups, parents and students could easily come together to plan the project. In addition, many of the representatives were heads of their departments and policy makers. Also, many of these individuals were well acquainted with one another and had served together on other projects. Using a PATH planning process, site coordinators, community service providers, teachers, community stakeholders and others identified goals, barriers and a strategy for achieving the aims of the project.

The barriers identified fell into two broad groups; lack of resources and infrastructure typical of rural states and lack of comprehensive planning and coordination. Barriers identified under lack of resources and infrastructure include transportation, limited job opportunities, lack of post-secondary vocational training, physical isolation and a depressed rural economy.

Lack of comprehensive planning and coordination was attributed to differences in the goals, mandates and funding between school based and adult service programs. Participants in the planning process stated that some transition services were available. These included functional curriculum for acquiring daily living skills, and students receiving job experience by being placed in jobs. However it was felt that these services were fragmented and not consistently applied or well coordinated.

The project sites, have been established to develop model programs, cooperative working agreements, case management strategies and training programs related to transition from school to adult life. Each project site has a site coordinator responsible for improving transition services. Strategies include: improving the procedures regarding the transfer of responsibilities between agencies and secondary and post secondary service providers, improving case management services, promoting self-advocacy and family involvement and disseminating information on employment and service resources. The sites have begun to address these issues on a local level. It is the intention of the project to use these sites as laboratories to develop effective transition services and then to disseminate these practices to the rest of the state.

Successful Transition Strategies

1. Positive Working Relationships

The sites have found that one key to success is to identify and develop close ties to local resources. The site coordinators have found that developing a positive working relationship with key service providers including school personnel, vocational rehabilitation counselors, adult vocational programs, parent groups, employers and other stakeholders is critical. This can not be over stated. What is true elsewhere is especially in rural areas: trust and familiarity count for more than formal pronouncements.

2. Willingness to Work on Shared Projects

Another key to success is the sharing of resources and a willingness to work on shared projects. As sites began to implement their local plans most stakeholders expressed a similar concern. Everyone is juggling a multitude of tasks. A project can be successful if it can be shown that there is a willingness to work common projects. For instance, as an aid to secondary school teachers and service providers a site is holding biannual transition fairs that include employers, service providers, career counselors and others. This meets the need of a number of agencies and allows for expanded options for students and families.

3. Community Buy-In

Working with service providers is not enough. Community support, including, employers, families and students is critical to the success of transition services. The more people that understand the need for transition services, and the willingness of employers to work with service agencies, the more opportunities there will be for students with disabilities. A way of increasing community support and awareness adopted by the sites is to conduct focus groups in their communities. These focus groups have a dual purpose, informing the community about the project and asking for input on community needs related to transition issues.

4. Training and Education

One of the critical needs in rural areas is access to training, education, information and resources related to transition services. Assessing needs, providing technical assistance, and assisting school teachers and adult service providers with ways to upgrade their skills is seen as an important contribution of the project. In addition, investigating and helping to provide distance education resources in the form of tele-courses, Internet classes and other ways to bring educational resources to rural areas is seen as a plus to local communities.

5. Who's on First

Promoting self-advocacy and good case management is necessary and goes to the heart of the transition dilemma. Modeling good case management, including involving families and students, coordinating services and looking for service gaps, implementing early planning and promoting community involvement helps to show how good services can be provided.

Conclusion

The strategies adopted by the South Dakota Adult Transition project will improve transition services and can serve as a model for transition services in other rural areas. Central to the strategies is a commitment to students with disabilities to become full participating members of their communities and the willingness to think creatively about how to support students and families during this period.

Rural areas face unique challenges in meeting the needs of students with disabilities. An area difficult to address in a project of this type is the need to develop the resources and infrastructure that would make the transition process easier for all students. As a response to this some service providers have abandoned traditional job development and are pursuing community economic development as a strategy for increasing the number and variety of jobs for everyone, including persons with disabilities.

Rural communities can serve as a model for excellent transition services. Accessing resources and information is easier than it has ever been. Building ties between agencies and working out local solutions to local problems has been a hallmark of rural communities.

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Kerry Block
Meggin Koss
Theresa Speckner
Cody Bridwell
Chadron State College
Chadron, Nebraska

EDUCATING FOR LIFE: BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

The purpose of our work is to highlight the pedagogical benefits of mentorship in promoting the academic and affective growth of students with special needs in rural school settings. Mentorship encourages students and teachers to identify common interests and collaboratively explore boundaries of knowledge shaping thought and action. Meaning given to life experiences is jointly constructed. Individual skills and abilities are accentuated laying the foundation for intrinsic motivation to take root and blossom. Active participation in the learning process engages the school and community in shared decision making and cooperative leadership. In mentorship, value is given to every person and utilizes all resources reflective of a community's uniquely diverse population and culture.

Theoretical principles associated with chaos and constructivism play a critical role in understanding the role of mentorship. One important feature is that students and teachers act as participant observers in the learning process. As coaching specialists, mentors encourage experimentation, self-discovery, and divergent thinking. The relationship between teacher and student and the ongoing reversal of roles between each is pivotal. As roles change, a continual re-organization of information spontaneously occurs as prior knowledge and new perceptions become known through continual reflection, dialogue, and action. Similarly, the relationship between mentor and student changes and self-organizes as trust, mutual respect, and shared interests cultivate the need to learn more.

Communication regarding newly perceived insights highlight the need to seek answers to questions never before considered, raising curiosity and feeding intrinsic motivation. These learning paths have unlimited degrees of freedom. Initial conditions defining the learning context change chaotically as do educational goals and outcomes. Thus, the ability to cope with change is intricately woven within mentorship. Jointly constructed learning objectives may alter according to newly uncovered ideas. Applying ideas obtained from life experiences also influences the degree to which both teacher and student are able to cope with ongoing change. Opportunities for teachers and students to reflect on these experiences and the feelings associated with them are critical to the mentorship process.

Developing a safe, supportive learning environment is integral to mentorship (Trimble, 1994). Traditionally, many classrooms are arranged according to a teacher's own strengths. Students who cannot keep up or who act inappropriately are perceived as needing special education. They are identified, labeled, and remediated so that they may participate with their peers in the mainstream. In such a system, students have little or no voice. In many cases, they are pawns caught in political power struggles between people at the local, state, and national levels. These power struggles frequently express themselves in the perpetuation of educational models that assert control over students contributing perhaps to the increased number of at-risk students who prefer to drop out of school rather than to have their autonomy diminished. "Getting students to act appropriately is," as Alfie Kohn (1996) suggests, "curiously reminiscent of the quest to get them to produce the right

answers in academic lessons: Thus, the constructivist critique, which says that a right-answer focus doesn't help children become good thinkers, also suggest that a right-behavior focus doesn't help children become good people" (p. xv).
Perhaps challenging behavior should not be viewed as a mere indictment of youth today but rather signal to the education community that our methods of instruction are sabotaging the very democratic ideals we are trying to preserve.

What content is taught and the manner in which information is relayed may not necessarily allow students with special needs to fully realize their own potential. They may experience frustration or intense disconnection from the learning experience itself. As a result, greater weight may be given to relationships with teachers. Active listening may assist mentors in recognizing individual abilities leading to renewed school interest. This process is both uncomfortable and exciting. Teachers' roles, which often emphasize having lessons prepared before instruction, shift dramatically. In mentorship, lesson plans and topics of discussion are mutually constructed and jointly evaluated. Assessment is ongoing and changes in curriculum may occur at any time.

Once an environment built on trust and mutual respect has been established, it is important for learners to be given opportunities with help of mentors to identify their interests. Patience and consistent support in recognizing skills and abilities is critical. Mentors may interview students and be interviewed. Pertinent information can be used to construct a learning map outlining topics students and teachers may wish to collaboratively explore. Meaning made from this socially constructed dialogue may also be used to initiate involvement with other members of the school community. In Piaget's spiral of knowledge, the ever-widening spiral characterizes this change and sense of inclusiveness from moment to moment: Any knowledge raises new challenges as it solves preceding ones (Gallagher & Reid 1981). New insights may dramatically alter or reinforce present perceptions. Prediction as to the exact path and goal of the learning experience is subject to the individual narratives and interests mentor and student bring to the conversation with one another. Negotiation and continual evaluation of these shared conversations is an important component of mentorship. The dynamics of this interaction are fluid, turbulent and unpredictable because people vary in their perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving activity. (Diaz, Neal, Amaya-WIlliams, 1990, p.137).

The ability for teacher and student to share ideas and reflect on them is fundamental to learning transformation in mentorship. Emerging ideas are adapted into existing knowledge frameworks which may or may not alter thought. When enough disequilibrium exists, the need to accommodate gives attention to increasingly anomalous information. Such recognition results in strands of knowledge being reevaluated and reconnected into a larger, ever-changing context.

> ....Complex adaptive systems are constantly revising and rearranging their building blocks as they gain experience...At some deep level, all these processes of learning, evolution, and adaptation are the same. And one of the fundamental mechanisms of adaptation in any given system is this revision and recombination of the building blocks. (Waldrop 1992, p.146).

What seem like individual strands of knowledge in isolation are perhaps levels of scale we have yet to discover. The tension increases as prior knowledge (knowing what we know), conflicts with knowing what we do not know. The sometimes sudden realization that a different way of thinking previously unaware to us exists, lays at the heart of mentorship. Teacher and student explore these paradoxes as they arise. Such exploration combines key components of Piaget's spiral of knowledge with principles in chaos theory. The ever expanding Piagetian spiral representing the sum total of knowledge obtained from self-reflection and action changes over time. These changes and the reasons for them may be recognized at any time throughout the learning cycle. In addition, strands of knowledge may organize themselves or attract into a pattern reflecting where teacher and student are in the mentorship process. With continued exploration, teacher and student become comfortable with the only constant: Change (Bonstingl 1992).

Implications of Mentorship

If learning is chaotic and developmentally inconsistent then the structure of our educational system must be re-examined. Perceptions that education is in crisis perhaps reflect the realization that current methods of instruction contradict our deepest sense of knowing that learning is non-linear, active, and socially mediated. As such, classroom instruction should incorporate as much as possible opportunities for teachers and students to engage in dialogue centered, experiential activities reflecting individual strengths and needs.

Learning, in fact, may extend beyond the context of the classroom. Teachers might find students are best served by having them apprentice with other professionals in the community. Mentorship provides a framework for students to actively participate in the learning experience in a way that goes beyond cultural boundaries or physical or mental disabilities. Mentors serve as liaisons among a community of people who support, challenge, and guide novices as they increasingly participate in skilled, valued sociocultural activity (Rogoff, 1990).

Thinking and learning are functional efforts by individuals to solve specific problems of importance in their culture. In understanding cognitive development, it is essential to take into account the particular problems that children are attempting to solve (Rogoff, 1990). Learning in apprenticeship may provide opportunities for rural communities to tap into their own cultural resources encouraging interaction between people whose expertise coincide with learners' self-assessed interests . The role of the mentorship is to guide, nurture, support, students and simultaneously facilitate opportunities for learners to take risks, express ideas, and recognize and use their own creativity (Weeks, 1992).

The need for teachers to create an empathetic, non-judgmental classroom environment that stimulates the expression of diverse points of view and elicits sharing of knowledge obtained form individual life experiences is vital. Students may learn to reflect on and practically apply mutually developed course content to their own individual skills and abilities while exploring boundaries of knowledge that expand a teachers and students jointly construct meaning.

Mentorship may also be used in facilitating continued acceptance and inclusion of ideas generated by administration, faculty, and community members towards systemic planning and leadership (Moon, 1994). Interdisciplinary discussion and collegial dialogue is a natural byproduct of mentorship resulting in ongoing professional renewal. Cooperative discussions that incorporate the individual voices and skills of all community members stimulates collaborative problem solving and visionary planning. The outcome of such interaction enriches the learning environment and creates an educational mission dedicated towards including individual and collective voices in the teaching and learning process.

When people are given opportunities to exchange ideas and actively participate in shaping academic and affective standards and outcomes, individual responsibility and accountability is enhanced. Creating an inclusionary model of education based on mentorship that is democratically constructed and mutually maintained, reinforces a lifelong passion for learning.

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A LOCAL SCHOOL MODEL FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH PDD AND AUTISM

Prepared By:
Frank C. Renew Jr.
Director
Autism Support Center

Introduction

This **LOCAL SCHOOL MODEL** for teaching students with PDD and autism was developed as a response to the request of Special Education Directors who are exploring effective educational alternatives for their students diagnosed with autism, PDD, Asperger's Syndrome or related conditions. Some of their schools have experienced significant increases in the number of students with these diagnoses. Special education administrators who formerly might have encountered 1 child with PDD each year might now identify 5 students with autism related diagnoses coming into their schools the following year. These special education administrators recognized the need for advanced educational planning for these children and initiated a series of exploratory meetings. These meetings were held out of recognition of the significant obstacles facing any new program in today's complex school environment. These exploratory meetings provided a forum to discuss ways to meet the educational needs of these students as well as to discuss appropriate ways to extend their services beyond the typical school day. Options which might not have been plausible a few years ago now seemed realistic. Many educators of autistic students have identified a need for "Extended day" or "Home-Based" services which would benefit the students by:

a) protecting the educational progress made to date;
b) increasing the amount of skill training and, therefore, the likelihood of educational progress towards the objectives in the student's current Individualized Educational Plan (IEP);
c) contributing to an integrated effort to prevent the need for "Out-of-District" Placements;
d) integrating the child's family and natural social support system into efforts to build social and communication skills.

The exploratory and planning meetings were necessary because the demonstration of "need" may not of itself be sufficient to establish a new and complex program.

Intensive early treatment and education greatly improves the outlook for children with developmental disabilities (Shonkoff, J.P., and Hauser-Cram, P, 1986). Some educators (Lovaas 1987) estimate that as much as 30-40 hours per week of discrete trial 1:1 teaching may be required for these students to realize their potential. While there are numerous program models for these children (Handleman and Harris , 1994), until recently, only specialized schools or residential placements for students with autism could provide anything like that degree of relevant training by qualified staff.

Program Elements

What follows is an outline (Powers, 1992) of services necessary to support a classroom for students with autism or autistic like traits. Clearly, not every school district would need the same array of services but would only need to augment the services they already provide. This outline is based on the following considerations:

1. Early Diagnosis and Intervention;
2. Discrete trial teaching techniques;
3. Sensory Integration activities;
4. Parent involvement and support;
5. Inclusive opportunities with typical peers.
6. Intensive language training;
7. Intensive socialization training;
8. Teaching generalization skills;

I. Staff Training

As in most effective program models, there will be an ongoing series of Training and Orientation Sessions on topics such as:

Confidentiality
Precision Teaching
Discrete Trial Teaching
Designing Behavioral Objectives
Integrative Language Training
Data Recording
Inclusive Techniques with Autistic Students
Correct use of Reinforcement and Punishment
Physical Interventions
Functioning on a Team
Social Integration
Data Analysis

These sessions will be conducted weekly in an afternoon session which will also include student progress reviews and **3 prescheduled IEP meetings for each student throughout the school year.**

II. Supportive Services

These services include:

1) Parent Support....which would provide an opportunity for **parents** and **siblings** to address their emotional issues around the autistic child;
2) Parent Training ....about the nature of autism, the services the child is likely to require, and behavior management and teaching techniques.;
3) Home-School Coordination....to maintain communications and cooperation;
4) Technical Assistance in Aspects of Autism....to improve the efficacy of teachers and parents around highly specific topics such as language training; and ,
5) Behavior Management.....at home or in school.

Besides the "Home-Based" services mentioned above, there will also be an after school component that would support the child's social and communication skill's progress in a natural way. One such natural after school component is **Community Based Recreation.** Community Based Recreation programs offer autistic children a natural connection to peers in their home community in settings that let the child practice the social, communication, and instructional skills they have drilled during the school day. Community Based Recreation programs are held in local YMCA's, gymnasiums, swimming pools and parks and offer students structured opportunities to learn and to participate in a wide range of games, sports, and community events. The following service model includes Community Based Recreation as one component of an over all "After School" and "Home-Based Service Support" model for autistic students.

A Model for Home-Based Support Services

1. "After School" or Community Based Recreation Activities

Each student will be included in a supervised and structured Community Based Recreation program. This Program will occur each school day shortly after the end of school and will last for approximately 1 hour. A recreation therapist from the local YMCA will design and supervise each activity assisted by teaching assistants. The activities will be selected to offer opportunities for students to practice specific skills which are part being developed during school sessions as designated by their IEP's. The Community Based Recreation Activities are intended to supplement the structured recess built into the daily schedule.

2. Family Support Groups

Weekly family support visits and monthly **Family Support Groups** are scheduled to provide a nexus for communication between the parents and staff and among groups of parents. These sessions will provide an opportunity for parents to express their concerns, compare problems and solutions, to network on family issues, and to learn useful strategies. These sessions will occur at the school site and will include staff members where appropriate. There is likely to be a need for support to the brothers and sisters of the diagnosed children in the form of Individual and Group Sibling Support.

3. Family Training

There will be weekly training sessions for family members on teaching, parenting, and behavior management techniques. These **Family Training Sessions** will coincide with monthly Parent Support Groups. These sessions will be practical and realistic, based on actual issues raised by family members. Initially there will need to be weekly training sessions for family members. Later, as each individual family acquires basic understanding and skill, this training might be held in groups. Skilled family members have been shown to be crucial in effectively teaching autistic students (Deal, A., Dunst, C. and Trivette, 1988). According to Schreibman, L., Kaneko, W., and Koegel, R. (1991):

"Parent training has been shown to be effective in affecting a wide variety of behavior changes in these children and to promote generalization of training effects."

In other words, trained parents augment the school day academic training and lead the way in teaching social and self-help skills.

4. Home-Based Tutoring

While some researchers have determined that as much as 37 hours per week of Home-Based 1:1 tutoring is necessary for maximizing the progress of autistic students (e.g. Lovaas, I., 1987), the practical problems of locating and training appropriate in-home trainers are formidable. It is unlikely that classroom teachers can offer the amount of precision 1:1 teaching and corrective opportunities that an autistic student requires. Therefore, it is necessary to support the school day teaching effort with Home-Based Tutoring. The current proposal suggests 2 hours per day of Home-Based tutoring per student be provided by the classroom teaching assistants or other in-home teaching assistants.

5. Home-School Coordination

As the student's skill repertoire increases in social or cognitive complexity the importance of Home-School Coordination grows. While the progress of any student is enhanced with coordination between home, school, and community, the progress of autistic students is often critically dependent upon it (Koegel, R., Koegel, L., and Schreibman, L., 1991). Medication, tantrum, self-abuse, social, and language issues of autistic students bear close monitoring for improved chances of success.

6. Technical Assistance in Aspects of Autism

The Autism Support Center maintains a file of nearly 2000 journal articles, books and video tapes. Professionals throughout New England attend our workshops and avail themselves of our technical resources. Many of the questions or concerns which the staff at the have about teaching autistic students can be answered through use of these resources.

7. Extended School Year or Summer Program

Students with autism have notoriously poor retention over long periods of time. Summer programs for these students are tremendously successful and safeguard everyone's investment in their educational progress. While these summer programs may not always be as intensive as their regular school year programs, they do provide additional learning and social opportunities in structured learning environments, compatible with the student's regular programs.

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William F. Young
SERTCC Board Members
SERTCC
Brunswick, GA 31520

SERTCC Intensive Family Based Services - A Supportive Alternative to Out-Of-Home Placement for Troubled Children and Their Families

The Southeast Regional Troubled Children's Committee, Inc. (SERTCC) has been in existence since 1985. The involvement of SERTCC initially was with an understanding that cooperative agreements between the six divisions of the Department of Human Resources and Education at the state level would come about. This working together would assist in providing community resources to serve troubled children at the local and regional level. At it's beginning there was some indication that State Troubled Children money might be decentralized and given to regional and/or local committees to make decisions on services for troubled children; Since this concept did not materialize, SERTCC has continued to move forward in helping local troubled children committees form and become functional agencies within each of the twenty-four counties that is service by SERTCC>

SERTCC received a National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) grant for $550,000.00 from the Federal Government with the cooperation of the State Department of Human Resources (Division of Mental Health) to provide services to troubled children and their family in the twenty-four county area. This was a five year grant which ended in June of 1992. The State of Georgia, seeing the potential and positive impact of this program, funded SERTCC at $135,000.00 a year as an item under the State Department of Human Resources (Division of Mental Health). By providing intensive family-based services within the homes of dysfunctional families, we have been able to keep families together and prevent out-of-home placement. We have served families in all of the twenty-four counties located in southeast Georgia. Over the last eleven years SERTCC has served not only the child referred but other siblings and parents/guardians of that troubled child referred. As you are aware, when you are dealing with a troubled child in a dysfunctional family, you are really dealing with the entire family unit.

CAN YOU SEE SERTCC IN ACTION?

With a sincere commitment on the part of CEO's of human service agencies, the business community and compassion for the children of our communities, the concept of SERTCC can work in any community. It takes dedicated people from all human agencies, business and education working together as a unit to be effective and really make a difference. We in southeast Georgia are very fortunate to have this kind of working relationship.

We (SERTCC) believe that the concept of interagency collaboration and networking between human service agencies and the private sector provides a purpose, allows the players to be focused on helping at-risk students and dysfunctional families along with providing:

a) Professional Staff Development
b) Interagency network on daily and weekly basis
c) Becoming a liaison resource for other agencies
d) Quarterly Staff Development
e) Intensive family-based services for multiple service areas can be replicated effectively by adapting the concept to match the needs of your area.

INTENSIVE FAMILY BASED SERVICES
OPERATIONAL MODEL

1) **FAMILY COUNSELING**: To include any of the following:
   a) Crisis intervention
   b) Counseling to strengthen marital unit and to help husband and wife in parental roles.
   c) Counseling to single parent or other guardian in order to strengthen and structure positive parenting techniques techniques and teach behavior management where needed.
   d) Counseling to help organize and structure family unit through more specifically clarifying roles, setting limits, and more clearly defining the behavioral expectations of one another.
   e) Teach communication skills and problem solving.
   f) Teach parenting skills such as child growth and development, child caring techniques, infant stimulation, toilet training and accident prevention.
   g) Teach stress management techniques such as coping skills, anger control and relaxation.
   h) Teach organizational skills such as money management, time management and scheduling.
   i) Counsel to help stabilize living arrangements.
   j) Counsel individual member or family as a whole about needs for long term therapy.
   k) Group Activities -

2) **COORDINATE COMMUNITY RESOURCES**
   a) Act as a referring agent and liaison between family and community resources.

CURRENT FUNDING PROVIDED:

Because of the success rate of our program while under the National Institute of Mental Health grant, which was 85 percent successful, we applied for State funding and with the Governor's approval, we are receiving state funds through the Mental Health division of the Department of Human Resources. At the current time we are funded at $144,400.00 to administer intensive home based services to at-risk children and youth and their families in southeast Georgia.

STATUS AND FUTURE PLANS:

The families of southeast Georgia are gratified that Governor Zell Miller thought highly enough of our program to include it in the FY-93 budget and has continued to fund our program since. We believe that the type of services and the way they have been administered is a cost effective alternative to other, more expensive and intrusive, options for troubled children.

SERTCC, Inc. has been granted 501-c3 status which allows us to submit proposals for foundation grants. SERTCC is also available to receive any contracted services from other agencies that deal with dysfunctional families and troubled children. This purchase of services is cost efficient and effective as compared to intensive and intermediate care and you will be keeping the family together. Our success rate is outstanding.

The general membership meets quarterly with the officers and board members meeting monthly to provide direction and leadership not only to the general members but also to the service providers who are doing the important work with these dysfunctional families and their troubled children. As you can see, our commitment to troubled children in the area is just as strong as ever and we feel like we are making a real difference with the families that we are involved with in providing in-home services.

In summary, the purpose of SERTCC is to develop, facilitate, improve and coordinate the delivery of services to troubled children and their families in primarily a twenty-four county area of southeast Georgia. Our goals are:

1) to ensure appropriate case resolution and case staffing at the local and regional levels;
2) to develop effective policies and procedures to achieve the purpose(s) of the organization;
3) to develop and /or facilitate continuum of community resources to meet the needs of troubled children and their families;
4) to advocate for services to children intervention/ prevention) through age twenty-two and their families;
5) to help increase the responsiveness of various agencies to the needs of children and their families through staff development and staff training.

THINGS COMPLETED SINCE 1994

1) Conference Annual ('94-'95-'96)
2) Quarterly Staff Development
3) Provider Training for Certification
4) Group Therapy
5) Family Connection (Commission on Children & Youth, Camp Adventure)
6) International Literacy Plan (Mackaton ESDL England)
7) Fiscal Agency (Interagency Networking - Special Projects)
8) Annual Planning through Retreats with Board & Providers
9) Refined the Providers Packet of Information - better communications between referring agency and provider.
10) Agency Facilitator for New Programs & Projects Statewide
11) National Speaking Resource for Groups (United Methodist)
12) Expanded boundaries of service beyond original 24 counties
13) Broadened the services delivery model from crisis to intervention/prevention
14) Completed Needs Assessment of the service area
15) Expanded Special Education Teacher of the Year awards from eight to twenty-four counties (Annual Conference)
16) Networking between State Department - Superintendents - Special Education Directors and Community
17) Annual Luncheon (Membership)

Steve Pavlovic, M. S., and Billie Friedland, M. S.
West Virginia University
Morgantown, West Virginia

REFLECTIVITY IN SUPERVISION AND TEACHING

Introduction: Reflectivity is the ability to turn an experience or subject over in the mind, giving it serious, consecutive consideration. Experience plus reflection and consequential changes in action or direction equal growth (Posner, 1985). According to Gore (1987), "reflection frees us from routine and allows us to create."

Reflective practice is an integral part of effective teaching and professional development. Because education is a rapidly changing field, the ability to reflect on change and its relationship to teaching is critical to leadership development. Special and regular educators today must be prepared to take teaming and leadership roles. In his book, "Mind, Self, and Society," 1934, George Mead emphasized that role-taking becomes an important mode of self-reflection and self-criticism (Clift, Houston, & Pugach, 1990, p 61). Teachers also need to reflect on the reciprocal and dynamic impact of their own experience on their educational philosophy.

Background: Depending on one's philosophical orientation, the role of teacher as decision maker varies. Positivistic reflection is instrumental; Humanistic reflection is deliberative; Moralistic reflection explicates aims, values, and connection; and Constructivisitic reflection calls for reconstruction at the following three levels: (1) teaching in relation to expected practice and learner outcomes, (2) self, in varied and changing roles of educator, and (3) presumptions and assumptions about educational and societal norms. Van Manen (1977) called this third level the basis for social critique and change (cited in Clift, Houston, & Pugach, 1990, p. 41).

The Constructivists take the position that, "How a person attributes meaning to the phenomena they experience is an object worthy of study." This brings focus to process as well as to content or facts. Steps in the process of reflectivity are: (1) involvement in a scenario, (2) recording the scenario, (3) reading the record for meaning, (4) abbreviating and representing the meanings for future use, and (5) confirming the meaning in experience of others (Garman, 1986). Reflectivity requires systems analysis and change.

Rationale: Throughout history, teachers have balanced their intuitive and reflective thought using any resources they could find, adapting materials to suit their own purposes and methods. Reflectivity is being practiced in small pockets of the field today, however, it is still and yet not widely supported or encouraged (Vaughn, 1990). This is due in part to practitioners' lack of information about the processes involved, and in part because reflectivity cannot be added onto a service delivery system that does not support it. Because reflectivity requires systems analysis and change, it must be viewed by the professional community as an integral and not an ancillary educational activity.

From the supervisor-mentor perspective, many commonly used tools and strategies for encouraging teachers to reflect more deeply on their teaching roles can be incorporated into practicum experiences such as taping, interviewing, engaging in dialog and discussion, using journals, developing a portfolio. In working with pre-service teachers, the influence of the supervisor is generally enough to command an attempt to reflect. For supervisors working with in-service training programs, however, encouraging teachers to reflect is often much more difficult. Frequently, requests to reflect on current practices are viewed as a threat to personal and professional self esteem and are given only cursory or grudging effort. These teachers are already employed in the field, and often consider that, by virtue of their years of experience, they are necessarily more competent than their respective supervisors. In some instances, they are mindful that the supervisor's opinions rarely tend to effect their employment status, and this being so, are of not much real concern to them. In other instances, in-service teachers are afraid that any criticism will effect their already insecure employment status.

Some common barriers to be overcome regarding the use of critical thinking and reflective teaching that are faced by practicum students are listed (not prioritized) as follows:

(1) Distrust due to negative perceptions or past experiences with the supervisor/supervisee relationship;
(2) Ego-defensive reactions due to low self-esteem or low professional expectations;
(3) Fear of revealing too much information related to areas in need of further development;
(4) Fear of excessive or unhelpful criticism;
(5) Inexperience and lack of role awareness;
(6) Job insecurity;
(7) Lack of confidence in ability to make real change;
(8) Lack of system supports for reflective practice and deliberation;
(9) Low sensitivity to issues faced by people with disabilities and their need for advocacy;
(10) Poorly developed time management or organization skills;
(11) Time limitations and other environmental constrictions that limit reflective interaction.

Given the range in personal, professional development of these students, and range in their support for using reflective techniques, balanced with the need to work within a competency based practicum required by the state certification board, we decided to apply the four approaches to one existing competency cluster (lesson planning), to make that process more reflective of data-based decision making (Positivistic approach). Supervisor-supervisee sessions are facilitated by a structured dialog format which requires the supervisor and the practicum student to reflect on the same questions directly after each observed lesson is taught (Humanistic and Moralistic approach). A directed weekly journaling component to follow the observed lesson plans was designed to assist the practicum student in identifying their own teaching philosophy as practiced and to identify the contribution of their philosophy to the learning which occurred in the classroom. Additionally, a Personal/Professional Development Plan (Constructivist approach) is required upon completion of the practicum. In this plan, the practicum student uses Reflective Analysis and Synthesis of their teaching activities to:

(1) identify their own teaching strengths & needs,
(2) develop teaching strategies to meet individual learner needs,
(3) increase flexible adaptation to new situations,
(4) promote awareness of the impact of their personal/professional philosophy on individual learners,
(6) promote awareness of the reciprocal impact of their teaching activities on their personal/professional philosophy.

Description: The identification of discrepancies between beliefs and actions is one of the pivotal ideas of reflective practice. By reflecting on these discrepancies, both practicum students and supervisors can improve the effectiveness of their work. Supervisors must facilitate learning, reflect on their own work, communicate proactively, participate in group collaboration, and change norms that are central to current practice (Arredondo, Brody, Zimmerman,, & Moffet, 1995). Supervisors must be mindful that feelings and attitudes of practicum students can affect their learning, and communicate proactively to avert negative affects. While recognizing that procedural knowledge requires some trial and error learning, supervisors must share what they have gleaned from past experiences and the study of best practices.

Practicum students need to feel safe and comfortable in the supervisor-supervisee relationship, so they can see the importance both of completing these tasks and how the tasks are inter-related. They should seek clarity about tasks required of them in the syllabus, and take part in open and meaningful dialogue. They need to continually examine what they do in relation to what they believe, what they believe in relation to what they do, seek more information about those beliefs and actions, and plan for further action (Arredondo, Brody, Zimmerman, & Moffet,1995).

This reflective focus on process incorporates and integrates the minimal teaching competencies that are inherently tied to the West Virginia State Teacher Certification process as outlined in the syllabus. Practicum students must provide the supervisor with evidence to demonstrate at least minimal competency on each designated indicator. Guidelines and roles for the observation and reflection process were established for practicum students and supervisors. Activities included the practicum student completing a Reflective Teaching Pretest and Post-test, engaging with the supervisor in a Structured Reflective Dialog, completing Weekly Reflection Forms, and Video-taping two (2) Episodes of instructional, assessment, and/or consultative activities, with a brief written evaluation describing her or his observation of each taped session to be shared with the supervisor. The practicum student creates a workable Personal/Professional Development Plan (different from the Individual Practicum Plan).

The supervisor visits and observes planned and transitional activities first hand, reviews daily class outlines, lesson plans and reflections, and reviews video taped episodes with the student, using the developed forms as a basis for dialog, and discussing with the student any changes noted. Evaluation criteria were set for each activity on a scale from 1-2 (weak= inability to successfully demonstrate individualization of instruction) to 3 (adequate = formulates and integrates goals and objectives; creates, finds, and conducts activities to meet objectives) to 4-5-6 (strong= recognizes reciprocal impact of beliefs and actions; identifies own learning from week's activities; reconstructs and summarizes weekly experiences in a meaningful way). A strong reflective teacher shows consistent signs of improved development, with strong evaluations in the last week of practicum and a good personal/professional. development plan. An adequately reflective teacher shows consistent evaluations of adequate, with some strong evaluations in the last eight weeks of practicum and a good personal/professional development plan. A teacher is weak in reflection if s/he shows consistently weak evaluations with little or no sign of improved development.

Data Collection and Analyses: The following processes were used to obtain data: (1) The structured dialogues were analyzed qualitatively for emergent themes categorized by information sought on the student's reflection and supervisor's observation reflection forms. Patterns were then identified by looking at types of responses across students, with setting variations taken into consideration. (2) Pre and post-practicum responses on sixteen predetermined items were analyzed using item by item nonparametric comparisons to determine if there were any items showing significant overall movement between pre and post outcomes. Each response was assigned a categorical numerical value from 0-2, with 0 = a negative response, 1 = an expected response, and 2 = a reflective response (as per criteria described above). (3) The weekly structured journaling activity was analyzed qualitatively for reflective changes over time, and was scored on a scale from 1-6 based on the criteria described above. Week by week nonparametric comparisons were used to determine if there was movement over time for each practicum student. (4) The taped sessions were not analyzed other than to form the basis for dialogue between practicum student and supervisor.

Results: On analysis of pre and post-practicum data, only one of the unfinished statements showed overall significant movement in a positive direction between pre and post responses. That was item (7), "When I have a problem in the classroom, I___________;" Items (8), "My family_________________my job"; and (9), "My students________________my job," approached significance in the positive direction, away from negative responses that indicated a lack of support for their efforts.

Analysis of the structured reflective dialogues revealed that the majority of practicum students could specify what learning was being promoted and what targeted learning was taking place, however, most had real difficulty identifying the incidental learning that might be taking place among students. About half of the students were able to recognize that impediments to learning were environmental factors that could be manipulated such as interruptions, lengthy activities, external noises, overly structured activities, or ill-suited clothing. One practicum student said, "the child's hood kept falling into her line of vision." Many responses were child-based, however, such as acting out, pushing objects away, child's dependent behavior, children jumping around, and child's own psychomotor speed. Several practicum students had difficulty naming alternative approaches and methods to presenting their lessons. Those who relied heavily on direct instruction also used more hand-over-hand assistance and less play-based or facilitated discovery learning. In general, those practicum students who varied their mode of instruction to include a number of different types of presentation experienced fewer distractions and socio-behavioral difficulties among children in the classroom. The smooth transition from one activity or setting to another is also a concern.

Analysis of the weekly structured journaling exercises over twelve (12) weeks for seven (7) practicum students revealed no overall significant changes except for the second and third weeks of school and the two weeks surrounding Halloween, during which the general level of seasonal activity for teachers and children is high. Two practicum students consistently remained significantly above median in the strong reflectivity category. Four clustered around the median. One scored consistently below the median. One dropped from variations close to median to well below median in the last week of practicum. This drop, although dramatic for the individual, was still not significantly different from the group as a whole. This is the first cohort studied, and within subjects analysis is currently in progress.

Notable quotes from weekly structured journaling revealed practicum students' surprise that children could accomplish so many independent living tasks, and that play-based activities yield excellent results.There were comments regarding the observation of generalization from one skill area to another. Recognition was expressed that managing the environment can bring better control over outcomes.

One practicum student commented that she learned that small children will indicate their readiness to learn a new set of skills, therefore, she allows the child to take the lead. Comments about parent participation overall indicated low expectation of parents in their assumed child development and child care roles. The general tension created by the dilemma of providing structure and offering opportunity for experiential learning was evidenced. Several reflections emphasized the need to be flexible, respond to children consistently, and communicate clear expectations of their performance. One student emphasized the children's need to be challenged. Modeling appropriate social behavior and an enthusiasm for learning was important to two students. One practicum student talked about the children having a "mind of their own...they think they don't have to listen." The supervisor was then able to encourage practicum student to harness the natural inclination of young children to achieve educational outcomes. Two weeks later, this same student commented that the presentation of visual aids and hands-on learning is more important than actually speaking, and in the next week this student stated that smaller group size works better to maintain the children's interest. In the next to her last week of practicum, this student related that she felt learning did take place, and she did not have to use direct instruction.

All but one of the practicum students are not reading professional material at any nearly adequate level to break their professional isolation and guide their practice.The one practicum student who reflected inconsistently around the median and then plummeted well below the median during the end of her practicum experience was reading about laws, regulations, and procedures for norm referenced testing. She was not enjoying her reading, so she diverted to a search for equipment to accommodate one of the children she serves.

The one student who scored consistently strong in reflectivity recognized the importance of incidental learning in the first week of practicum. Her responses indicated areas in which she was assessing her performance in relation to the learning needs of the children, rethinking her plans, and modifying her instructional approach to meet individual needs. She recognized good planning as a tool to free up time for flexibility and creativity. She successfully identified undesirable behaviors that she was inadvertently reinforcing and implemented a plan to reinforce desired behavior. Perhaps most notably, she is reading about alternative methods of assessment and teaching strategies, Tips for Teachers (Picture Portfolio), "Hands On," a new curriculum.
She traveled to Charleston, WV, to learn new procedures for student journaling. She obtained a new "ready to use" vocabulary activity to assist in individualizing curriculum access for one child.

Discussion: The positive movement found for item 7 on the pre and post measure provided a clear indication that practicum students were seeking collaborative efforts at problem-solving rather than trying to solve problems in isolation. Items (8), My family_________________my job; and (9), My students_________________my job, approached significance in the positive direction away from negative responses that indicated a lack of support for practicum students' efforts.

The reflective dialog that occurred after each observed lesson brought differences and additional comments up on the table for discussion, thus mutual learning from this activity served to enhance the supervisor-supervisee relationship. Zeroing in on differences allowed the student and the supervisor to justify their responses based on their respective philosophies, and to examine and deliberate on how the outcomes of their decisions impact their philosophies. Freeing the interaction from extraneous tensions that typically characterize ordinate/subordinate relationships allowed practicum students to share their ideas openly and asked questions (professional to professional), and supervisors to make suggestions related to the real content of practicum experience. A notable quote from a supervisor was, "Try making two products, one to publish the child's work, and one to take home, thereby strengthening family participation." One practicum student said, "We'll go to a real Bowling Alley someday." One practicum student realized through this dialog that she had helped a student master the concept of reversibility but had not independently identified that she had done so. Taping sessions for review allowed the practicum student to sit back and analyze their own performance, investigate the teacher-child interactions from an external perspective, and isolate aspects in need of change.

Suggestions for Implementation:

Conduct the initial site visit in an introductory and facilitative manner. This visit is for relationship building and clarification of the practicum student's questions regarding the practicum and supervisory expectations of the practicum student's performance.Get to know the building principal, the cooperating teacher (if the practicum student is a preservice student).

Allow for a variety of questions. Ask various types of questions, mainly open-ended questions. Take time to find out what the practicum student plans to do, or is already doing, that would demonstrate minimal competencies required in the syllabus. Mark down those questions you cannot answer on site. Seek the necessary information and respond to the student as soon as possible. Return all phone calls as quickly as possible.

Maintain a supportive stance with each practicum student at all times. Communicate caring and patience. Accommodate and facilitate learning with consideration of individual styles, abilities, and possible need for accommodations.

Conduct supervisory sessions with concern for the student's dignity and confidentiality. If someone mentions a student that you previously supervised, do not discuss that student's performance or relationship with the university under any circumstances. Practicum students are generally related by nature of the program through sharing common course work experiences. Guard against saying something that may discredit students who have participated in the program.

Make written notations in the marginal spaces provided on forms and narratives. Ask open-ended questions that elicit the student's attribution of meaning to the information you are noting. Discuss your notations with each practicum student. It is not considered good reflective practice to make a notation and then assume the student will get your meaning upon reading it.

The supervisory role is also a professional development role. Make resources available to practicum students. If you don't have specific addresses, find them and phone them or fax them to practicum students. Provide each student with a list of suggested readings on Reflective Teaching. The best way to teach reflectivity is to practice and model reflection. Share your reflective methods and experiences with the practicum students you supervise.

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Laura A. Reissner, Ed.D.
Northern Michigan University
Marquette, MI

USING TAPED BOOKS WITH CHILDREN AT-RISK: FOUR CASE STUDIES

For some children, the problems related to reading difficulty may stem from a lack of exposure to reading materials in the home (Heath, 1982; Kirby, 1992; Manning, Manning & Cody, 1988; Morrow, Paratore, Gaber, Harrison & Tracey, 1993; Scarborough, Dobrich & Hager, 1991; Teale, 1981; Warren, Prater & Griswold, 1990). For these children, it may be that they have not had enough exposure to reading materials and need more contact with written material than the teacher can provide. For the children who fall behind their peers in reading acquisition, getting back on level in a timely fashion is often quite difficult. In such cases, the proverbial "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" seems apt. Programs must be implemented which will help children succeed before they experience reading failure. When parents are unable to give their children the start they need, the responsibility shifts to the schools to provide missing opportunities for early success.

Providing children with books on audio and video tape is a simple time efficient method to bring those at-risk to a comparable level as those who have been exposed to a print rich environment. While this seems like an obvious solution to expose children to reading materials, very few classrooms actually have listening centers with taped books in them. It appears that teachers are using other methods to expose their students to print which may not be as effective. This simple strategy needs to be encouraged on a wider scale since it appears to improve children's interest in reading and improve their self-esteem. Teachers can easily replicate the results of this study with children in their own classrooms.

During part of a larger study in a rural West Virginia county, four children, two of whom were enrolled in a Title I program and who were at-risk for reading difficulty and two who had been classified with learning disabilities, were specifically observed to determine the effects of a repeated story presentation using books on audio and video tape. The effects on reading achievement and self-esteem demonstrated by these children attest to the potential benefits of this type reading instruction. The gains made by the four children who will be focused on should provide encouragement for helping students develop an interest in reading and opportunities to be successful and included in activities with their peers.

Donnie was a 6 year old kindergartner attending the most rural of the three schools used in this study. Donnie enjoyed riding his bicycle, watching television and scary movies at home. His mother used two words to describe Donnie- smart and stubborn. Donnie received Title I services as well as speech services and during the following academic year was retained in. Donnie's kindergarten teacher reports that Donnie has a lot of trouble remembering his numbers and that he could not identify all of the letters of the alphabet. He frequently got letters mixed up and has difficulty with reversals. Donnie also had a hard time deciding what he should be paying attention to in the classroom.

The other kindergarten child was a 6 year old named Sabrena. At the beginning of the year her teachers thought that Sabrena did not listen when directions were being given and that she did not comprehend during storytime. The speech teacher noticed that Sabrena was having difficulty understanding the use of pronouns. For instance, while talking Sabrena would say, "You were there" when she was talking about herself. Then she would be corrected with "No, YOU were there" and she'd say, "Oh, WE were there". After several weeks of this, school personnel began to realize that it was not a case of Sabrena not paying attention. The classroom aide helped break assignments into smaller pieces for Sabrena but she still had some trouble following directions given orally. Sabrena learned many coping strategies like watching the other children for cues and then acting accordingly. She also appeared to do best when new tasks are modeled along with providing auditory directions. Sabrena had difficulty finding the words to express herself on occasion according to her teacher. When asked a question that she was unable to answer, she continued to think about it even when everyone else had moved on. It was believed that the answers were there, she just could not get them out. Her teacher reported that Sabrena knows all of her letters and sounds. At least once a week the class writes in a journal on a given topic. Sabrena has a tendency to write about whatever comes into her mind even if her topic is unrelated to the assigned topic. Many stories are unclear until Sabrena explains them and even with explanations she appears to have her facts a bit confused.

Robert was one of the first graders who was followed throughout the intervention. Robert received full-time learning disabilities services for reading and spelling and behavior disorder consultation services the year after the study was completed. He received Title I services for reading for three years and repeated first grade. During reading instruction, Robert spent a great deal of time trying to sound out words but usually ended up guessing at the word. His teacher felt that Robert needed to develop a larger sight word vocabulary to help him with this problem. Spelling was also a weakness due to the fact that he is a phonetic speller, according to his teacher.

Chad was an 8 year old who is classified as learning disabled. His kindergarten teacher recalled that when Chad first came to school he was unable to hold a pencil or a crayon. He could not spell or write his name and he had difficulty holding utensils to eat properly. By the end of kindergarten, he was able to write his name and his teacher felt that he was very proud of his accomplishment. Chad was promoted to first grade where he continued to receive Title I services. By the end of first grade Chad was able to do addition facts up to 5. However, his reading was still on a kindergarten level. He was unable to put letters and sounds together to form words. He could spell a few three letter words from memory. His teacher also reported that he had a very hard time sitting still and that he was constantly moving but appeared to be unaware that he was. At the end of first grade he was classified as learning disabled and sent to another school in the county in order to receive services. Working with Chad academically, his special education teacher felt that he was not an auditory learner and had trouble attending to tasks. She felt that Chad needed to have many examples before he understood an assignment.

The intervention consisted of daily listening or watching one of eight books which were commonly recommended, predictable stories which contain either a refrain or sentence which was repeated throughout the text. Some of the books had a rhyming pattern to them. Over the course of the study the order of story presentation was random within blocks of eight stories, with the restrictions that the same story did not occur twice in a row (as the last story in one block and the first story in the next block) and that the same story was not presented twice during the same school week. The intervention lasted 32 school days. Students were randomly assigned to either the audio group where they listened to the book on audio tape and turned the pages of their own copy of the book or the video group where they watched the story being read on videotape without having their own copy of the book.

Donnie was randomly assigned to one of the auditory groups with four girls. He was cooperative throughout the interventions and seemed to look forward to hearing the stories. After the intervention Donnie was able to recognize that the print contained the message, that when we read we go from left to right and then return to the left on the next line. He also was able to follow along and match word by word with the reader. Interestingly, he was also able to recognize the meaning of quotation marks as meaning that someone was saying something. Several of the stories contained quotation marks, however they were never explained to the children. Reviewing the qualitative field notes collected during the intervention, it is apparent that Donnie made the greatest gains in his interest in reading. While talking about the stories on Day 6 Donnie said, "I hate words- they're junk. They make your heart blow up". On Day 18, the third time reading Happy Birthday, Moon, after the researcher mentioning that Donnie read the majority of the story with the tape he said that he didn't know how it read. It was pointed out to him that he read this story and he sat up straight in his chair, smiled and said, "yes, not bad for someone who doesn't know all of his letters! Well, I know H and B" (pointing at the letters in the title Happy Birthday, Moon. On Day 24, after hearing If You Give a Mouse a Cookie the third time, Donnie said that he loved this story and on Day 31 he said "I know a bunch of [this story] cause I read it!".

As the number of story repetitions increased so did the amount of time Donnie spent with the story. At first, he began reading before the tape by looking at the pictures and then he began reading after the tape, and gradually he began reading with the tape. Eventually, beginning with Day 18, he would try to read over the words with the voice on the tape and finger point to the text he was reading.

One of the most rewarding parts of watching Donnie's reading development during the stories was to see him recognize letters and words. His confidence in his reading ability began to increase. Donnie started to take control of the stories when he began finger pointing as he read. He mouthed the words to the stories and he was able to answer simple comprehension questions about the stories. Donnie's off task behavior also decreased when his interest in the stories increased. It appeared that having stories presented repeatedly enabled Donnie to feel confident with the printed word.

Sabrena had experience with print because her mother read to her every night. Sabrena worked very hard in school. However, her teachers noted that she had been having receptive and expressive language difficulties. Sabrena, like other children in kindergarten, was very picture focused in the beginning of the intervention. She seemed to look at the pictures and responded with answers to questions that were based on the pictures, rather than the text. Part of her reliance on the pictures may have been due to her receptive language difficulties. During the first set of stories, Sabrena would look at the cover of the book, identify whatever was on the cover and then look to the end of the book to see the last picture. Then she would try to follow along. Sabrena also seemed to rely on others for clues as to when to laugh and when to turn the page. This may be because this is a coping strategy that she used in her regular classroom. After the stories were over she would raise her hand to talk about the stories but she couldn't remember anything to say. When asked specific questions about the story like what kinds of food did Gregory like she would shrug her shoulders. During the first reading of The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything (Day 8) Sabrena remembered that the "lady wasn't scared of anything and that the hat, head, shoes, shirt, and pants all found the lady". This was the first time that Sabrena remembered details from the story.

As Sabrena became more familiar with the stories she began to listen more to the text and repeat what had just happened in the text. During the second reading of The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything (Day 10) Sabrena was trying to read a few words with the tape. She was able to say all of the motions that the clothing made (clomp, wiggle, shake, clap, and nod) and she knew that the pumpkin head said Boo boo. On many days Sabrena would repeat isolated words. For example, while reading Gregory, the Terrible Eater, (Day 13):

Text:	Gregory ate too much junk
Sabrena:	junk
Text:	Gregory tossed and twisted all night long
Sabrena:	twisted
Text:	Gregory ate two eggs, juice and wax paper
Sabrena:	orange juice

Sabrena also began to remember details from the stories. After reading Who's in the Shed (Day 12) she remembered that she liked when the animals all ran away. After If You Give a Mouse a Cookie she said, "I liked when he draw (sic) pictures. I liked when he colored, There was a mouse. There were cookies. There were letters. He looked at the book". She was still relying on others to help clue her in to some of the details. When other children would mention parts of the story Sabrena would fill in pieces also. For instance, in one story a child was talking about the mouse hanging his picture up and Sabrena knew that it went on the refrigerator.

By the third time through the stories Sabrena began to rely more on her own listening abilities and told others when they were on the wrong pages. She also began to finger point with the reading and try to follow along in the text. She began to answer questions that required inference, like where did bear get the hat in Happy Birthday, Moon and what did Gregory eat for breakfast in Gregory, the Terrible Eater. She also began to read longer pieces of text after the tape. For Sabrena, the repeated presentations seemed to allow her to become more familiar and comfortable with the stories. Due to her language processing difficulties, Sabrena may need to hear text over and over to really obtain meaning. Sabrena's comprehension and retelling of the stories increased as repeated presentations were made.

Working with Robert was often very frustrating, and yet rewarding. Robert was the only one of the four students followed as a case study who had been assigned to the video group. Most of Robert's reactions and comments are not typical of the rest of the children in the video groups. He had difficulty paying attention and controlling his impulsive responses, and was quite vocal during the video presentations. The time Robert spent outside of his classroom seemed to become a time for him to say whatever was on his mind. Robert did look forward to the interventions because he wanted to receive his daily attendance sticker and a reward at the end for participating (he was hoping for a new bicycle). While qualitative data did not indicate that the intervention had any effect on Robert, his test scores suggest that there was benefit.

As mentioned previously, beginning on Day 1 Robert was very vocal and restless during the intervention. During the first story he was predicting what was going to happen and asking questions about the video. He talked throughout and alternated between standing and sitting the entire time. The story Who's in the Shed (Day 4) presents a different animal on each page and cut out windows on the pages reveal pieces of who is in the shed. Robert tried to guess what animal would come next and what was appearing in the windows. When the bear appeared, he yelled "Bear" and then began acting like a bear by growling and using his hands like claws. He did not stop until it was time to return to the classroom. While it appeared that Robert did enjoy participating, he seemed to require a great deal of attention. He decided that the stories should all be read much faster during the second set and said that on a regular basis. He continued to discuss the stories with himself and to make up questions and answers for the text. One day he even started to repeat some of the text after the video during Who's in the Shed (Day 12). "Let me have a peep baaed the big white sheep. What did she see? Let me see said the pluck (sic) little hen". Then he got interested in the teeth that were showing in the pictures and said that it was an alligator, a wolf, and finally said he really knew that it was a bear. When the chicken tried to run away from the bear Robert began to crow like a rooster. He continued this type of behavior, repeating the story and acting out parts, for the rest of the week.

The third time through the stories Robert really seemed to know what was going to happen in each and he was able to retell large portions of the stories. After reading Who's in the Shed (Day 17) Robert said, "What is it? Let me take a peek said the white sheep. Let me take a peek said the cow. Now the old red hen. Let me take a peep said the old mare. Let me take a peek said the old hen. Let me take a peek said the old hen. Let me take a peek said the pig. How dare you stare said the old bear! Grrrr!" While he didn't have all of the story correct he had each of the animals correct and he remembered that they each asked to look into the hole to see what was in the shed. Apparently, even though Robert never appeared to be paying attention to the videos, he was able to remember many of the details.

During the fourth reading of the stories Robert didn't even need to hear the stories before he could tell you what was going to happen. If You Give a Mouse a Cookie was just starting and Robert said, "If you give a mouse a cookie he'll ask for milk, then he'll ask for a straw. Then he'll ask for a napkin, then he'll ask for a mop, no a wash rag. Then he'll clean up the bedroom, the whole room. He might notice to clean up the whole house. Then he'll clean up his bedroom. He'll want a story read to him. He'll flip flop his pillow. He'll ask for a story. He'll need a magnet to hang up his picture. He'll ask for a cookie. He'll ask for a glass of milk. Robert even began to remember tiny details like a poem that was read in Ruby the Copycat. "I had a cat. We never met because he always stayed behind me. And we never met". The actual poem went, "I had a cat I could not see.
Because it stayed in back of me.
It was a very loyal pet-
It's sad we never really met."

Chad's IEP goals for reading were: 1) to put sounds together to form words including blends and digraphs (three to four letters), 2) to identify and use short and long vowel sounds in reading, 3) to retell stories in sequence after hearing and reading, 4) to review consonants and identify consonants and sounds consistently, and 5) to identify sight words on a first grade level. Both the regular and special education teachers stated that Chad could only read a few sight words and that he was not able to sound out words. As in the story of Leo the Late Bloomer, Chad really came into his own late in the intervention. In the beginning, Chad did not understand the concept of turning the pages when the bell sounded, or following along in the book with the story. He did not understand that if he listened to the story he would be able to talk about what happened. Then one day, in his own good time, Chad seemed to figure it all out.

Very little can be said about Chad in the beginning of the intervention. He came with his group everyday and was very quiet. in the beginning, Chad wouldn't really look at the book, he would look around the room and look at the other students without appearing to focus on anything. Turning pages was a real difficulty for Chad; he was always on the wrong page or flipping back and forth from the front to the back. During the second reading of Who's in the Shed one of the other students repeatedly told him that he was on the wrong page. She said, "Hey Chad, turn back to this page. You're on the wrong page. You're on the wrong page, turn back to the sheep. The cow, the cow, you're getting it wrong! OK, the horse, turn to the horse. The chicken, I'm telling him and he still gets it wrong. The pig. Now it's almost done. Chad you're gonna be done before us". At one point Chad flipped through the rest of the book but never found the page that everyone else was on. When questioned about being on the wrong page, he said that he was right. Chad never realized that when he was hearing "Let me have a peep baaed the big white sheep" that he shouldn't be looking at the picture of the cow. The next day was the same thing with Gregory, the Terrible Eater, Chad would be on the wrong page and the others would try to help and he never got back where he belonged. When asked what the title of the story was or what the story was about Chad would always respond that he didn't know.

Quite suddenly Chad began to respond to the stories on Day 18. One of the students was saying hello moon like an echo as the story did and Chad said the moon can't really hear. This was the first time that he mentioned any part of a story and demonstrated that he understood what it meant. He was on the right page and he began to predict what was going to happen.
Text: He hiked...
Chad: through the woods.
Text: He paddled across...
Chad: the water

He even began to talk to the others about the story. Even though his responses were somewhat bizarre, it was the first time that he had interacted with the students in his group. Child 1 said, "this story isn't real". Chad responded that it was, the bear talked to the moon. Child 2, "No, that's an echo". Child 1, "Bears can't paddle in a boat", Chad, "Yes, they can." Child 2, "No, you're confused". Then Chad started to mutter under his breath, stupid idiot and said, "Come on buddy" and clapped his hands together. This was the last time that Chad was not with the group on the right page.

Day 20 he came in ready to attend, he stayed with the group and the story, he began mouthing words from The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything. He even remembered that she saw the shoes first, then the pants, shirt, gloves, hat and head. The third time through Gregory, the Terrible Eater he said that he ate everything and that he ate 25 tires which made him sick.

Day 22, Is Your Mama a Llama? Chad repeated the title then:
Text: Is your mama a llama?
Chad: (before tape) no she is not. Oh! I said.
Text: No she is not is what Freddy said. I think your mama must be a
Chad: llama. (pause) Swan.

Then he began mouthing the words with the tape and before the tape recognized the cow, the seal, and the kangaroo. The most exciting event that day was that another student was on the wrong page and **Chad** corrected **him**. Chad continued to make progress answering questions, predicting what would come next, following along in the book, correcting other students when they were on the wrong page. Everyone in the group recognized the difference in Chad and made a point of telling him that he had done a good job when he was on task. This was really rewarding for Chad because he seemed to have few positive interactions with his peers during the rest of the school day.

The ways in which the case study children were effected by the intervention were typical of many of the children followed during the course of the intervention. There were some who only needed to hear the stories a few times to remember what was going to happen and there were others who, like Chad and Sabrena, needed to hear them over and over again before they made sense. However, it is important to note that children who appeared to be the lowest at the beginning of the intervention seemed to benefit the most. These children seem to have to work twice as hard as their peers to achieve the same result. This intervention seems to have allowed them the chance to interact informally and positively with their peers and they all seemed to enjoy the extra attention of coming out of the class to share the stories. Without any direct instruction many children began to pick up reading strategies from one another and their confidence in their reading ability appeared to grow.

While it is difficult to speak about commonality for the four very different children followed as case studies, all four had low scores and little success in reading related tasks. While it is doubtful that eight weeks of an intervention completely changed their attitude about reading, it seems that the repeated exposure to books provided a measure of success for all four of the children. The informal setting and daily successful experiences of remembering details from the stories and discussing the events of the books appears to have provided a foundation for improved motivation about reading. Each of the children looked forward to hearing the stories and eagerly shared their favorite parts of the books. As Sudzina and Foreman (1990) found, when children are given opportunities to listen to books on tape they report greater feeling of self-confidence in their reading ability. The opportunity for these children to develop an interest in reading that wasn't there previously is perhaps the most exciting part of this research.

Children with processing problems frequently appear to be a "few steps behind" their peers. It takes them longer to figure out directions and follow through on them. Comprehension of spoken materials and text read orally is also delayed. For children with receptive language difficulties like Chad and Sabrena hearing the stories over helped them to derive meaning from the text. They both seemed to require all four presentations of the stories to be able to initiate discussions about the stories. They also benefited from the daily listening to help them develop the confidence that they were on the correct page and to actually be on the correct page. Tapes provide help for children who are having processing difficulties because the children can listen to them over and over.

For children with learning disabilities the opportunity to have positive group interactions with peers is very important. Providing books on audio and video tape allows children to work at the same pace and interact positively with peers while discussing the stories and sharing personal experiences. The time that is required for the story presentations does not take away from instructional time. The benefits include an increased ability to recall details, a familiarity with print and concepts about print, improved focus, and a developing sense of their own reading ability.

Children at-risk for reading failure and children with learning disabilities require more opportunities for language rich literary experiences than is currently afforded to them in the classroom. The repeated exposure to stories afforded by the use of books on audio and video tape has been beneficial for many of the children in this study. Teachers should be encouraged to use an intervention, like books on tape, to help their students improve their reading abilities which will not interfere with content instruction or require a great deal of teacher time or resources.
This research provides needed information on the benefits of using video and audio taped story presentations which has not been specifically addressed in the literature. Children do enjoy listening to audio tapes read by the teacher. There is a familiarity with the tape that can't be found in commercially prepared tapes. A natural extension of programs which bring parents into the schools to read to the class is to have parents making tapes for the classroom. Parents could leave a recorded version of their story for the children to revisit during free time. Guest readers can leave tapes in the classroom and children can try to figure out who is reading, people like the librarian, principal, custodian, and cafeteria workers can all participate by making tapes.

Teachers need to have many resources available to them to help the children in their classes who come to school without the experience of having had books read to them at home. By providing these children with books on audio tape and video tape, the additional exposure to print will enhance their readiness to learn. These two methods will not detract from the time that the teacher spends in direct instruction and will not take away from classroom learning time as tapes can be viewed during free time and non-instructional time.

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Rhoda P. Erhardt, MS, OTR, FAOTA
Private Practice
Maplewood, Minnesota

A MODEL FOR EYE-HAND COORDINATION IN NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

The purpose of this poster presentation is to describe a systems approach to the assessment and treatment of eye-hand coordination disorders in children with developmental disabilities. This model for early intervention can be implemented in home, school, and community environments by all team members, including families. Intervention activities are provided in natural settings, which attaches meaning, improves motivation, and increases the number of opportunities for practice, according to current theories of motor control and motor learning.

Although a variety of center-based and home-based programs are now legislated and available for children with special needs, rural areas present a number of barriers for families trying to access these services, such as the shortage of trained personnel and transportation issues, especially during northern winters. Therefore, it is important that families are able to reinforce recommended programming by incorporation into daily routines as easily and as often as possible. In other words, parents and extended family members can be trained to be therapeutic without being therapists.

System components of the model include: (1) cognitive motivation, (2) visual exploration, (3) tactile exploration, (4) eye-hand interaction, and (5) purposeful activity. Neurophysiological, developmental, and functional frames of references are interwoven throughout, to identify needs and plan intervention strategies.

Transdisciplinary team members, including parents, first consider the child's intrinsic motivation in terms of current cognitive development and play schemas, which will eventually culminate in purposeful, goal-directed, eye-hand coordination behaviors. Developmental exploratory stages including visual/tactile exploration and eye-hand interaction are linked with functionally-appropriate adaptations for practical solutions to postural and movement limitations. This task analysis facilitates awareness of how to increase independence in the child's occupational roles of play, self-care, and learner (student) in home, school, and community environments. Most importantly, the family collaborates with the other team members to choose specific activities which are already part of the child's daily routines and can benefit from adaptation strategies. Contexts need to be analyzed, to avoid the implication that the child needs to be fixed, when, in fact, contextual adaptations may be the key to more functional performance. Certain ecological factors such as persons, places, or objects may provide support, while others may create barriers to success. Function itself must be viewed more as a process than an outcome, and competencies need to be stressed more than deficits.

A photographic case study of a preschool child with cerebral palsy and visual impairments illustrates an application of the model for an individualized stimulation program, implemented by the parents, who are trained to be facilitators of learning and development within the context of their daily lives. Some of the activities presented and associated adaptations include:

- Play: toy car (battery-operated), card game (eye-gaze board), exploring the neighborhood (power wheelchair);
- Self-care: self-feeding (adapted spoon), dish-washing (prone stander), and
- Learning: prewriting (vertical standing frame, inclined easel, oversized chalk), reading (talking book), augmentative communication (LED scanning system, large print materials).

Inclusion of the parents in the planning and implementation process means that the program will be appropriate for the child and the home environment, will increase positive parent-child interactions, and will ensure continuity of intervention techniques despite changes in professional staff over time.

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Libby G. Cohen
University of Southern Maine
Gorham, ME 04038

Loraine J. Spenciner
University of Maine at Farmington
Farmington, ME 04938

Beatrice Okyere
University of Southern Maine
Gorham, ME 04038

EARLY LITERACY ACTIVITIES: EXPERIENCES OF RURAL FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Evidence points to the fact that family-child engagement in literacy activities is important for the development of children's literacy, especially for children who are "at risk" for school failure (Paulu, 1992; Wigfield & Asher, 1984; Zill, Collins, West, & Germino Hausken, 1995). A direct relationship exists between family-child engagement in literacy and "at risk" characteristics that have been identified in the literature. Examples of such characteristics include single parenthood, low socio-economic status, low parent educational background, and language spoken at home. Data collected in 1991 and 1993 for the National Household Education Survey (NHES) clearly showed that "at risk"children were less likely to have been read to, told stories regularly by a family member, or visited a library (Wright, Germino Hausken, & West, 1994).

Several researchers (Baker, et al., 1996; Wright, et al., 1994) have examined children's early literacy experiences at home. Middle income families viewed literacy as a source of entertainment; and, therefore, encouraged their children to participate in joint story book reading and independent interactions with print. A higher percentage of children were read to in homes where the mother's native language was English. Low income families emphasized structural activities to develop literacy skills. Black and Hispanic children were more likely to be taught letters and words than other children. These families provided fewer print-related activities and the activities that were provided were designed for the cultivation of skills such as identifying letters and reciting the alphabet.

Research has emphasized family-child early literacy experiences in the general population (Sonnenschein, Brody, & Munsterman, 1996; Thompson, Mixon, & Serpell, 1996). Very little is known about the early literacy experiences of children with disabilities who live in rural areas. The purpose of this study was to investigate the early literacy experiences of children with disabilities who live in rural areas. This exploratory study focused on a subset of a large data set, the National Household Education Survey of 1995, that was released by the U.S. Department of Education in the Fall 1996.

Methodology

Background: The National Household Education Survey of 1995

The National Household Education Survey of 1995 (NHES: 95) was developed by the U.S. Department of Education to collect information concerning two main areas: adults' participation in adult education and children's participation in child care and early education programs. Two earlier NHES surveys, NHES: 91 and NHES: 93, provided the first comprehensive views of early care and education program participation of young children in the United States.

The early care and education component of the 1995 NHES Survey was designed to survey families of young children with and without disabilities, ages birth through 10 years, and to collect information regarding education, services, family activities, and early care. The Survey consisted of two instruments: a screening interview and Early Childhood Program Participation (ECPP)Interview. The ECPP interview collected extensive information on a number of children's personal and household demographic characteristics, parent/guardian characteristics, early care and education, children's health and disability statuses, and literacy-related home activities. The survey included some questions regarding special services and the individualized family service plan (IFSP). There were no questions

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regarding an individualized education program (IEP).

NHES:95 survey methodology. NHES: 95 was a random digit dial telephone survey that was conducted by Westat, Inc. The sample was drawn from households with telephones in the 50 states and the District of Columbia and conducted from January through April, 1995. Special weighting procedures were used to adjust the survey estimates to match totals from the Current Population Survey, using poststratification variables that are associated with telephone coverage. Families were identified as living in a rural area, outside an urban area, or in an urban area, according to the U.S. Census.

Each household interview began with a Screener that was obtained information used to sample adults and children for the Early Childhood Program Participation (ECPP) interviews. ECPP interviews were completed with parents of 14, 064 children, ages birth to 10 years. These in depth interviews included 4,135 infants and toddlers, 3, 431 preschool children, 1,680 kindergarten children, 4, 717 primary school children, and 101 home school children.

Data reliability. In order to minimize potential bias associated with nonresponse, several techniques were employed. These consisted of a calling protocol, refusal conversion efforts, and implementation of a Spanish language questionnaire. The average administration time of the survey (12.6 minutes) was considered to be a critical factor in obtaining high response rates and reliable estimates. The completion rate for the ECPP Interview was 90.4 %. The overall response rate was 66.3 % (the product of the Screener completion rate and the ECPP interview completion rate).

Subjects

For this study, a subset was derived from NHES:95 that consisted of families with young children ages 3 through 8 years of age, since age 8 is generally defined as the upper limit of early childhood. These families included 1,316 families of children with disabilities and 8, 009 families with children without disabilities. Families were located in the three population areas (Table 1).

Insert Table 1 about here

Procedures

For this study, the following variables were identified and tagged from the 1995 NHES data set:

1. Race/Ethnicity: The survey asked respondents to indicate whether they were White, Black, Hispanic, or other (which included American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, or some other race).

2. Parent Education: We were interested in several survey questions relating to the education of the child's parents. These questions included whether or not the mother and the father had a high school diploma or GED. Other questions focused on the highest level of education for the child's parents.

3. Native Language: These survey questions sought information regarding whether or not English was the native language of the mother and father.

4. Children with Disabilities: The family member responding to the survey indicated whether or not the child had a disability such as specific learning disabilities, mental retardation, speech impairment, serious emotional disturbance, deafness or hearing impairment, blindness or visual impairment, orthopedic impairment or another health impairment.

5. Child and Family Literacy Activities: The survey contained several questions regarding home literacy activities including the extent to which: a family member read to their child, the child read to a family member, a family member told a child a story, and a family member visited a library with their child.

6. Grade Level: Children were identified by grade level including: preschool, kindergarten, first, second, or third grade.

Once the data subset was created a preliminary analysis of the variables was conducted using SPSS (SPSS,

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Inc., 1997). WestVarPC (Westate, Inc., n.d.), a software package designed for use with complex sampling procedures, was employed to refine the data analysis and to compute replicate variance estimates. For estimating sampling errors, a jackknife method (JK1) was used.

Results

Rural Families with Disabilities

The demographic characteristics of the families in this study were examined by population area (Table 2). Families with disabilities living in rural areas (85 %) and outside urban areas (72 %) were overwhelming White; whereas, in urban areas, there was greater diversity in respect to race and ethnicity (57 %). English was the native language for the vast majority of mothers in rural areas and decreased gradually in more populated areas: rural mothers (94 %); mothers outside urban areas (92 %); urban mothers (84.6 %). Fathers, apparently, were not native English speaking to the degree of mothers: in rural areas (76 %) and in urban areas (52 %).

Insert Table 2 about here

Families who had a child with a disability differed from families without disabilities in several important areas. In general, there was a trend in the incidence of children with disabilities to be higher among parents with less than high school education than for parents with a high school diploma or higher education. However, the standard error of these reports was also higher than for other parents with more education.

Among Black children, there seemed to be a higher percentage of disabilities than in other race/ethnic groups. This difference occurred across population areas. In rural families, 9% of Black families reported that their child had a disability and 7% reported their children were developing typically. Outside urban areas, 11% of Black families reported a child with a disability; 8% reported no disabilities. In urban areas, 22.8% of Black families reported a child with a disability; 19% reported that their children did not have disabilities.

Rural Families and Early Literacy Activities

Reading to children. In general, over half of the young children, both with and without disabilities, in our study were read to every day by a family member and three quarters of the children were read to on a regular basis each week (at least three or more times). Although reading to children occurred on a regular basis for many children, 4 to 6% of the children had no family member who read to them in the past week (Table 3).

Across population areas, there was a trend for primary age children with disabilities to be read to more frequently than children without disabilities. Further analysis of this data by grade level indicated that reading every day peaks around first grade, begins to drop in second grade, and then falls off by third grade.

In contrast, nursery school children with disabilities were read to less frequently than their peers. Seven percent of the families read to their child with a disability daily; while for children without disabilities, 11 % of the families read to their child daily.

Insert Table 3 about here

Child read to family. In general, few children read to a member of their family on a daily basis. Across population areas, 17.8% to 25% of the children with disabilities and 15% to 18% of the children without disabilities read daily to a family member. There was a trend for children with disabilities to read more regularly (at least three or more times a week) to a family member than for children without disabilities. In rural areas, far fewer children with disabilities (32%) read to a family member on a regular basis (at least three or more times a week) than children with disabilities in urban areas (67%). An analysis by grade level indicated that reading to a family member peaked at second grade for children with disabilities and at first grade for children without disabilities. Reading on a regular basis dropped sharply after that for both groups of children.

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Family storytelling. For all the children in this study, more family members told their children stories than read stories to them. This trend was found for children both with and without disabilities and across population areas. Rural families with disabilities tended to use storytelling more frequently than families living in urban and outside urban areas. Similar to other early literacy activities, storytelling decreased sharply by second grade for all children. Interestingly, more children with disabilities were told stories more frequently in kindergarten, first, and second grade than children without disabilities. However, nursery school children with disabilities were told stories less frequently than children without disabilities.

Visits to the library. Across population areas, visits to the library with a family member in the past month ranged from 39% for rural children with disabilities to 45% for urban children with disabilities. In general more children, both with and without disabilities, living in urban and outside urban areas visited the library than rural children. Visits to the library tended to peak in kindergarten for all children.

In each of the population areas, children with disabilities visited the library less frequently than children without disabilities. Nursery school children with disabilities (3.68 %) visited the library less frequently than nursery school children without disabilities (7.83 %).

Discussion

The demographics of this study illustrate that most of the families living in rural areas were White, native English speaking families. For the vast majority of the families, the highest level of education for the child's parents was at least a high school diploma, GED, or beyond. Parents who had less than a high school education reported having a child with a disability more often than not. This finding is not surprising as parent education level has long been known to be a key indicator for children at risk.

For each of the population areas, the reports of Black families indicated a higher incidence of disabilities than other racial or ethnic groups. The disproportionate representation of African American children who are identified as having disabilities is disturbing. The impact of "at risk" factors such as single parenthood, low socio-economic status, low parent educational background, and language spoken at home should be explored further. Consideration should be given to the extent the incidence of disabilities is related to assessment and identification procedures.

This study found that rural families promoted early literacy in a variety of ways. Parents read to and told stories to their children, listened to them read, and visited the library. With regard to early literacy activities, rural families differed from families living in urban or outside urban areas in several respects. Fewer rural children with disabilities were not read to at all by a family member compared to urban children with disabilities. However, fewer rural children with disabilities read to a family member on a regular basis than children living in urban areas. Fewer rural children visited the library with a family member in the past month compared to children living in urban or outside urban areas.

During the primary grades, families who had children with disabilities were as involved with early literacy activities as families who had children who are developing typically. However, before school age 5, there was a marked difference between the level of involvement in literacy activities for families and children with disabilities. Preschool children with disabilities engaged in early literacy activities with family members to a less extent that preschool children without disabilities. This finding raises several questions. Does the daily care of a child with disabilities, prevent many families from having time to spend in other ways? How can various early childhood special education services support early literacy activities for young children with disabilities?

Schools and agencies responsible for services to children with disabilities must find ways to promote family involvement in early literacy activities, particularly for preschool children. The impact of early intervention services and programs that provide early childhood special education services needs continued research. What opportunities for early literacy activities might be supported by these services? What are family priorities and how might they be supported regarding early literacy in the home?

The NHES: 95 data set provide a vast array of information reported by families concerning early care and education. This exploratory study raised many question regarding how young children with disabilities from diverse backgrounds are identified and how families could be supported by the service delivery system. Future NHES surveys should be designed to include additional areas in the identification and provision of services for young children with

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disabilities. Efforts should be made collect information on both IEP's and IFSP's since some states require IFSP's for children ages 3 to 5 years and all states require IEP's for children older than 5 years.

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Table 1

Number of Subjects by Population Area

Population area	Families with disabilities	Families without disabilities
Rural area	248	1632
Outside an urban area	160	957
Urban area	908	5420
Total	1316	8009

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics

	Rural				Outside Urban Area				Urban			
	Children with disabilities		Children without disabilities		Children with disabilities		Children without disabilities		Children with disabilities		Children without disabilities	
	percent	s.e.[1]	percent	s.e.	percent	s.e.	percent	s.e.	percent	s.e.	percent	s.e.
Race Ethnicity												
White	85.46	2.65	86.73	0.94	72.40	4.11	77.05	1.88	57.07	1.88	59.02	0.83
Black	9.47	2.10	7.24	0.80	11.36	3.51	8.79	1.44	22.84	1.83	19.14	0.54
Hispanic	2.70	0.89	4.00	0.61	12.17	2.73	10.12	0.80	13.51	0.98	15.58	0.35
Other	2.37	1.00	2.03	0.40	4.07	2.26	4.04	0.98	6.57	0.98	6.26	0.39
Mother's Native Language												
English	94.48	1.66	94.45	0.79	92.89	2.12	89.49	1.14	84.68	1.41	80.07	0.71
Not English	1.03	0.48	2.05	0.46	4.76	1.65	5.39	0.60	8.62	0.97	10.81	0.45
Father's Native Language												
English	76.41	2.80	76.22	1.32	65.51	5.07	74.19	2.17	52.38	2.03	59.40	0.79
Not English	0.92	0.48	1.62	0.38	4.81	1.57	4.35	0.58	4.79	0.68	7.40	0.31
Highest Level of Education for the Child's Parents												
Less than high school	10.26	2.55	7.52	0.93	9.65	2.71	6.06	0.90	14.42	1.60	9.37	0.42
H.S. grad or equiv.	37.71	3.65	36.35	1.77	40.66	4.66	32.03	1.66	29.23	1.78	27.97	0.85
Voc. tech. ed. after H.S. or equiv.	32.99	3.34	30.14	1.32	31.91	4.09	32.68	1.87	30.49	1.90	27.33	0.77
College graduate	7.64	1.80	15.02	0.91	11.27	2.84	15.44	1.50	12.70	1.29	18.47	0.75
Graduate or prof. school	11.41	1.98	10.97	1.02	6.51	2.37	13.79	1.31	13.15	1.32	16.86	0.64

[1] s.e. represents standard error

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Table 3

Percentage of Three to Eight Year Olds Who Have Participated in Family Literacy Activities

	Rural				Outside Urban Area				Urban			
Activity	Children with disabilities		Children without disabilities		Children with disabilities		Children without disabilities		Children with disabilities		Children without disabilities	
	percent	s.e.[1]	percent	s.e.	percent	s.e.	percent	s.e.	percent	s.e.	percent	s.e.
Family member read to the child in the past week												
Not at all	3.89	1.60	5.27	0.59	3.36	1.59	4.72	0.75	6.53	0.89	6.46	0.36
Once or twice	16.72	2.55	14.38	1.04	13.79	3.11	15.79	1.39	18.87	1.44	16.10	0.66
Three or more	28.22	3.30	27.64	1.48	28.24	4.30	28.43	1.70	28.59	1.87	25.96	0.62
Every day	51.17	3.96	52.71	1.65	54.51	4.85	51.06	2.20	46.01	1.82	51.48	0.82
Child read to family member in the past week												
Not at all	4.49	1.40	2.36	0.45	2.89	1.60	1.80	0.50	5.60	0.79	2.65	0.22
Once or twice	12.50	2.80	8.96	0.71	15.09	3.13	7.70	0.96	10.85	1.18	9.19	0.33
Three or more	15.11	2.48	14.55	0.80	10.31	2.75	14.36	1.49	16.44	1.57	13.35	0.47
Every day	17.89	2.60	15.46	0.95	25.03	3.33	18.16	1.38	18.55	1.32	15.09	0.50
									48.57	1.98	59.71	0.43
Child told story by family member												
Yes	77.15	3.71	75.99	1.66	81.33	3.71	75.91	1.93	72.44	2.55	75.88	0.68
No	22.85	3.71	24.01	1.60	18.67	3.71	24.09	1.93	27.56	6.70	24.12	0.68
Once or twice	32.22	3.35	34.29	1.52	38.36	4.89	35.96	1.99	31.10	4.71	35.50	0.75
Three or more	44.93	3.68	41.70	1.55	42.97	4.84	39.95	1.76	41.34	4.52	40.38	0.87
Child visited library with family member in past month												
Yes	39.02	3.32	41.18	1.54	43.27	4.47	47.83	2.03	45.21	1.93	46.74	0.90
No	60.98	3.32	58.82	1.54	56.73	4.47	52.17	2.03	54.79	1.93	53.26	0.90

[1] s.e. represents standard error

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Sonya C. Carr, Ph.D.
Southeastern Louisiana University
Hammond, Louisiana

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT WORKING WITH EXCEPTIONAL FAMILIES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Research in the field of special education has increasingly demonstrated the importance of family involvement in the education and habilitation of children and youth with disabilities. In addition, federal legislation (IDEA) has mandated parent involvement in the identification, diagnosis, placement, and programming of children and youth with disabilities. The special education teacher has a critical role in facilitating this involvement, often acting as a liaison between the school and the family. In rural areas, collaboration is particularly important as family members can become essential resources in program planning and implementation.

Today, there is strong support for the notion of training special education teachers to work effectively with families (e.g., Shea & Bauer, 1991; Simpson, 1996; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997). Teachers have traditionally received little formal training in this area and typically rely on personal experiences with their own families and communities. Training is even more critical for teachers working with families in rural areas, as unique approaches and specialized skills may be required. It has long been advocated that university faculty develop specialized training models to address the unique needs of rural special educators (e.g., Cole & Leeper, 1995; Helge, 1984; Marrs, 1984). This argument is particularly powerful given the high attrition rates of rural special educators (e.g., Berkeley & Lipinski, 1991; Helge, 1983; Lemke, 1995).

A specialized rural training program has been implemented at Southeastern Louisiana University (SLU) in the Department of Special Education. SLU is a regional university serving 14 parishes (counties), of which eight are considered rural according to the most recent U.S. Census. Since 1992, the author has infused rural issues into "The Exceptional Family" course as one component of this specialized program. The primary purpose of the Exceptional Family course is to provide students with an understanding of exceptional families using a systems perspective. Cultural diversity, with emphasis on rural culture, is explored and differences in cultural factors are examined. The course is essentially divided into three sections. Students first, acquire an understanding of a family systems approach through lecture, as well as use of videotapes, case studies, and small group activities. Differences between urban and rural communities are examined as they relate to families and school districts. Special challenges exceptional families in rural areas may face are examined. In the second section of the course, students learn about effective communication strategies and practice nonverbal and verbal communication skills. They participate in values clarification activities, role plays, and other small group activities designed to help students learn about themselves and reflect on their own communication skills. Videotaped segments in which parents describe their experiences with professionals are used to make lectures and readings more relevant and meaningful. In the third section of the course legislation and litigation relevant to special education are examined, again utilizing a family perspective. A "Listening to Families" project is completed by all students to apply course content and practice communication skills using an interview format.

The purpose of this paper is to present the perceptions of teachers enrolled in the Exceptional Family course. Because these teachers lived and worked in rural communities they may have unique perspectives regarding the exceptional children and families they serve. Teachers' perspectives on home visits, working with "difficult" families, value conflicts, roles of the teacher, and training needs are examined.

Method

Participants

Over a five year period, 157 individuals participated in the revised Exceptional Family course. Student enrollment was between 14 and 32 students each semester, with the majority of students involved seeking special education certification and/or a master's degree. Other students enrolled were either counseling or speech-language and hearing majors. For this paper, only the responses of the 92 rural teachers completing the course were examined. Most of these were teachers with certification in regular education, who were seeking certification in special education and/or completing a graduate program of study leading to a master's degree.

Questionnaires

As a method of formative evaluation, a pre-course, post-course questionnaire procedure was established. The pre-course questionnaire, an adaptation of one developed by Kerns (1992), consisted of six open-ended questions designed to obtain information about previous experiences and training in working with families, as well as perceived value conflicts or problem areas in their actual work in the schools. The post-course questionnaire examined changes in attitudes, beliefs, or practices based on course involvement. Additionally, a follow-up questionnaire was sent to selected students one to two years after course completion to investigate changes in teacher beliefs and practices.

Procedure

Students completed the pre-course questionnaire anonymously during the first class meeting each semester. Responses were requested as a means of eliciting individual perceptions of families, as well as training needs and priorities. The post-course questionnaire was completed on the last class meeting and again these responses were anonymous. Questionnaires were kept in a sealed envelope for the instructor until after grades were submitted each semester.

For the follow-up questionnaire, a list was compiled of rural teachers completing the course between 1992 and 1995. This sample consisted of graduate students enrolled in the master's degree program and/or participants in a federally-funded rural personnel preparation project. Individuals for whom mailing addresses were available were surveyed one to two years after completion of the course. A total of 35 questionnaires were mailed with a letter explaining the purpose of the questionnaire and assuring anonymity of the responses. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they resided in and taught in a rural parish (county). Fifteen questionnaires were completed and returned for a response rate of 43%. Because responses were anonymous, there was no follow up of nonrespondents.

Results

In the following paragraphs, summaries of teachers' responses for each of the three questionnaires are presented.

Pre-Course Questionnaire

The majority of respondents reported no formal training in working with families of children with special needs. Most described a one-day workshop or information presented in an introductory special education course as the only source of information on working with families. When asked about their involvement with students' families, many teachers clearly did not consider close involvement with families as desirable or part of their responsibilities. They tended to make judgmental statements about these parents. Teachers typically viewed parents as one dimensional figures and their comments indicated a limited understanding of family life. Rural families were often described as reluctant to disclose personal information and cautious or withdrawn in dealing with the school system. Conflicts were viewed as being "caused" by or the responsibility of family members and not the teacher.

Post-Course Questionnaire

The majority of teachers reported that the course had changed their views or at least confirmed and expanded previously held views about exceptional families. According to one teacher, "It reaffirmed my belief in parent/professional collaboration and partnership. This is easy to lose in the daily grind." Another teacher said, "Parent involvement is crucial in planning the education program of children. As an educator, I need to realize that what is happening with the child is affecting all members of his/her family. If I am to better understand what is happening, I have to get the parents involved."

Teachers indicated that they would be more sensitive, more empathetic, and less judgmental. For example, "I'll think twice before condemning a family for failure to participate." And according to another teacher, "I believe I have more empathy for parents. I now realize that I sometimes blamed them for their child's behavior problems. I'm more likely to consider that they have different concerns, needs, and priorities rather than writing them off as uncaring."

Many teachers indicated their intent to use newly-learned techniques to "build rapport and true partnerships" with the parents of their students. As one teacher stated, "I now view parents as a vital part of planning their child's educational program." Teachers described wanting to "empower" parents rather than making all decisions and doing things for them.

During the course, students completed a role play of an interview with a rural family. They audio taped this interview to allow grading of the interaction for a course assignment. Most students reported that the activity forced them to examine their communication skills and to reflect on the manner in which they carry out meetings with parents. Students indicated that this activity generated new insights. For example, "It was good to be sitting on the other side of the table [as a parent]. The interview helped me to realize all of the emotions and concerns that these parents go through."

Teachers agreed that they would approach situations in which value conflicts arise differently. Many recognized that greater family involvement in a child's educational program is a first step in preventing conflicts. Several teachers expressed thoughts similar to the following: "Parents know their child better than anyone else and it is their right to see that their child's needs are met." And according to another teacher, "I probably will be more willing to allow and encourage broader views and different values because I am now more aware of their importance."

Teachers reported that their views of their roles in working with families had changed over the semester. For example, one teacher said, "I see my role as assisting families more than the "authoritarian" way I used to respond." And according to another teacher, "I now see that I must include all family members and that their input is necessary and valuable." Teachers reported feeling committed to encouraging family involvement, particularly in IEP or IFSP conferences. They reported that they would invite more parental input by listening more carefully, seeking parental opinions, and asking open-ended questions. As one teacher indicated, "Although I have always wanted to involve the families more, I felt as if I couldn't really connect with them. Now I will try different methods."

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When asked, most teachers said that their involvement with families would be different because they were more skilled. Many planned to provide additional information to parents, and to more carefully explain issues such as legal rights and the evaluation process. Some teachers commented on the notion that a family's logistical problems may interfere with school involvement. They indicated that they would try to recognize potential logistical problems and take this into consideration in planning meetings. As one teacher commented, "I will be more thoughtful about logistics that may cause families hardships." And according to another teacher, "I think now I will be less apt to jump to conclusions when a parent doesn't come to a meeting. I will be more considerate of their time and responsibilities."

Finally, with regard to their level of comfort or discomfort in working with families, teachers indicated that their new understanding of family systems contributed to greater comfort in working with families. As one teacher commented, "I feel more comfortable because I feel like I have strategies and resources that I can rely on to help me interact with families more effectively." And according to another teacher, "I feel that I have grown as an individual. I can relate better to families and various problems they encounter."

Follow-up questionnaire

Each of the six follow-up questions is listed along with a discussion of teacher responses.

Did the course, the Exceptional Family, change your attitudes toward and/or interactions with the families of your students? Teachers indicated that since completing the course they had a better understanding of families, stresses faced by parents and siblings, and how families could react to stressful situations. As one teacher reported, "The project required made me directly confront reality. While texts explained details and labels, actual contact with real life situations made me ultimately a better teacher." Teachers described using course information in planning homework assignments, evaluating problems, and resolving conflicts. As one teacher noted, "I was encouraged to try harder to get families involved in my students' education."

Which course topics/activities were particularly effective in developing your own skills for working with families/parents? The most influential activities identified were use of case studies, role plays, and a rural parent's presentation of her family's life story. As one teacher stated, "I very much enjoyed and profited from the role-playing sessions. We experienced the feelings that parents have and this I think makes me understand the parents better." Teachers also identified three topics as being very influential: family systems theory, coping strategies, and exchanging information with families.

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How might this course have changed your understanding of the special challenges faced by families living in rural areas? The majority of respondents emphasized potential logistical barriers that rural families face. They cited lack of transportation, access to services, and support as examples of these obstacles. According to one teacher, "Before taking this course I usually interpreted parental noninvolvement as an attitude of unconcern. This course helped me to become aware of the many reasons that may keep rural parents from being involved with the school and/or their child's education." And another teacher reflected on teachers who only have experience in urban settings, "understanding the lack of transportation, the isolation of not having a phone, and the lack of modern conveniences (indoor plumbing) is necessary to comprehend the priorities and perspectives of some rural families."

Have you incorporated more family involvement since taking the course? All teachers reported success in encouraging greater family involvement. Strategies found useful included: examining school records to seek out more family information, using a notebook to correspond daily with parents, calling parents frequently, encouraging all family members to visit the classroom, involving students in activities such as 4-H and Special Olympics, and planning additional parent/teacher conferences. One teacher also emphasized the importance of listening to family members as a means of encouraging family involvement. As she said, "I listen more, and ask them what they want rather than telling them what I am going to do."

If your behavior has changed, has this had any impact on your colleagues? Several teachers reported that they had helped other teachers become more aware of the need for family involvement. They described serving as role models or advisors for new special education teachers, and acting as advocates for involvement of exceptional families in meetings and advocates for special education students in school activities. Some teachers indicated that additional information obtained through increased parental involvement resulted in an improvement in the quality of IEP conferences, and in other teachers being more willing to provide appropriate adaptations for students. As one teacher explained, "I never fail to mention that the 'problem' child being discussed is in fact someone's child, that the whole picture must be taken into account. I encourage teachers to talk to families to work things out as a unit."

Has taking this course had any other impact on your personal and/or professional life? Professionally, teachers indicated that they were more relaxed and more skillful regarding discipline in the classroom. They also viewed themselves as more respectful and empathetic with others who have different values or ideals. "The course made me more tolerant, understanding, and caring in dealing with parents, siblings, and students." With regard to their personal lives, one teacher stated, "I have tried to look at my own family in a slightly different light." And another teacher stated, "In my personal life, I've taken others' personal situations (religion, financial situation, background, etc.) into consideration."

Conclusion

Teachers' views of exceptional families changed as an outcome of involvement in this course. Some individuals described the course as an "eyeopener." Most individuals developed a new understanding of family dynamics, and recognized the impact on the family of a child with a disability. While they may have previously paid "lip service" to the notion of family involvement, they came to recognize that family involvement is essential. Teachers were excited about developing more effective communication skills and acquiring strategies to encourage family involvement. Many teachers indicated that they planned to use family needs surveys and structured interviews as tools to develop a better understanding of family needs and priorities. As one teacher said, "Now I have a lot more resources to offer them and I have a step by step professional plan on how to handle difficult situations."

In the process, teachers also developing an understanding of why they should not impose their values and/or expectations on others. In their final comments, many described the importance of attempting to "walk in the shoes" of family members. With regard to changes in their perceived roles, one teacher said, "I see it as assisting or aiding the families more than the 'authoritarian' way I used to."

Another interesting outcome of this course for teachers is the understanding that while developing a partnership with a family may require greater effort initially, it can lessen the load on the teacher because decision-making responsibility is shared. As one teacher said, "I'm more relaxed about letting parents have more control." And another teacher, "Yes, this course has made it easier not to 'bring them home' and worry. Although I can still care, I am not so personally responsible for what my idea is of their needs. What works for them may be better than my idea of what is best." And a final comment, "I never really thought I had the ability to help a family but now I feel "empowered."

The positive comments of these teachers on the post-course and follow-up questionnaires are exciting. These comments indicate that teachers and family members can become empowered as they collaborate in program planning and implementation. The knowledge and skills acquired in courses like "The Exceptional Family" can influence special educators' decisions to remain in the field and continue to serve their rural communities.

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Doris Jones
Greg Prater
Susan Miller
Susie Gilmore
Robbie Harwood
Charlotte Morris
Nancy Badonie
Becky Gilmore
Terri Hall
LaRue Gilmore
Jan Wooll
Duree Scot
Tamara Joseph
Britt Tallis
Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ
KUSD, Kayenta, AZ

WORKING WITH NAVAJO PARENTS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Introduction

Parent involvement is essential for the success of all students. Teacher organizations strongly believe that students who have parents actively involved in their education are more successful (Novakowski, 1996). Public Law 94 - 142 and Public Law 99 - 457 mandate that parents have the right to be actively involved as decision makers in their child's Individual Educational Programs (Bishop, 1991). Henderson, Marburger and Ooms (1986) indicated three major prerequisites for schools to follow which advocate parent involvement. First, parents are most likely to be involved in their child's educational program if the school climate is helpful, open and friendly. Second, parents are most likely to be involved when there is frequent, clear two-way communication. Third, parents are more likely to become involved when they are treated as equals in collaborative pursuits.

Working with parents of exceptional children in rural areas can be very rewarding and challenging. In rural areas such as Kayenta, Arizona on the Navajo Reservation schools are required to consider the linguistic as well as cultural needs of their families. Many parents may live as far as 45 miles from the school on dirt roads. Others are working a great distance from their home site herding sheep and cattle. These factors create distinctive challenges in reaching parents. Conditions are further complicated by the very specific communication needs between the school and the parents of students with disabilities (Ysseldyke, Algozzine & Thurlow, 1992).

Kayenta is located in the heart of the Navajo Reservation which covers approximately 24,000 square miles and encompasses three states (Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah) making it the largest Indian Reservation in the United States. 155,276 Navajos reside on the reservation (Tsosie, 1990). There are a few major communities such as Kayenta, Window Rock, Tuba City, and Chinle, but most of the reservation is spread among the rugged terrain of mesas, mountains, and high arid desert.

The total enrollment of Kayenta Unified School District (KUSD) as recorded in the 1995-96 school year was 2,799. Ninety-four percent of the parents who have children attending KUSD declared on language surveys that Navajo is the primary language spoken in the home. The total population of special education students in the Kayenta District is 206. Seventy-six percent of students currently enrolled in special education have parents who stated that Navajo is the primary language spoken at home (Turl, 1996).

Purpose

The focus of this paper is to present the cultural and linguistic considerations necessary to work with the Navajo parents of exceptional children. Successful techniques for working with parents which are currently used by KUSD are discussed. Additional information from the survey and interview data are also discussed.

Methods

This informal study was designed and the data were collected by undergraduate students currently enrolled in the Northern Arizona University Rural Special Education Project in Kayenta, Arizona, with the direction of university instructors. The students distributed surveys and conducted all interviews. Responses to individual questions from the surveys and interviews were analyzed to identify evolving themes. Additionally the students also accumulated, analyzed, and interpreted all data.

The participants targeted in this pilot study consisted of 20 KUSD staff members. The staff members were a combination of administrators, home liaisons (bilingual Navajo staff members who make home visits), and special education personnel. The 14 parental participants were all parents of exceptional children. Each of the parents currently have children enrolled in KUSD.

The Kayenta District staff included 10 Native American participants and 10 Anglo participants. A total of eight Kayenta staff members were interviewed and 12 of the staff members were given surveys that were later collected by the researchers.

The parental participants included 13 Native American parents and one Anglo parent. A total of 13 parents were directly interviewed by the researchers. Out of the 13 parents interviewed, 8 requested that the survey be interpreted for them in Navajo by one of the researchers. One parent completed a survey that was later collected by the researchers.

KUSD staff interview and survey questions:

1. What are the challenges working with parents in a rural area such as the Navajo Nation?
2. What are some techniques which have been used effectively working with parents in your area?
3. What elements could be added to strengthen the school to parent interaction?

Parental interview and survey questions:

1. Have you had any challenges in communicating or getting assistance to meet your child's educational needs because of the rural setting you live in? Please cite examples.
2. What are some of the techniques the school district has successfully used in contacting or working with you for the benefit of your child? Please cite some examples.

3. What elements could be added to possibly strengthen the school to parent interaction in your opinion in your rural area? Please cite some examples.

Kayenta School District Faculty and Staff Results

The responses to question number one (What are the challenges working with parents in a rural area such as the Navajo Nation?) revealed that the majority of school personnel felt that the challenges they faced were largely due to the diverse geographical location of the school district. One school employee stated that "cultural considerations, geographical distance and socioeconomic factors" presented very unique challenges to the staff of KUSD. Several responses revealed the need for many parents to have IEP meetings, parental rights, and teacher conferences interpreted into their primary language, Navajo.

Other linguistics concerns also were generated in the survey such as sensitivity to cultural discourse between two very different cultures. Kayenta staff participants (Navajo and Anglo) both mentioned that understanding the Navajo cultural was essential in bridging any communication difficulties between the parents and the school. Navajo is an Athabaskan language. Discourse differences between Athabaskan and English speakers are well documented. Even when a Navajo speaks English well, discourse differences from their primary language can hamper communication (Scollon and Scollon, 1981). Therefore, it presents staff who are working with Navajo students with the need to become familiar with a basic knowledge of the culture and the discourse differences between English speaking staff and Navajo parents.

Ms. Susie Gilmore is a Navajo who began her career in Kayenta Unified School district in 1981. She has worked as a paraprofessional, tutor, and spent the past seven years as the special education home liaison. She speaks Navajo and English fluently. Ms. Gilmore was brought up in a home rich in traditional Navajo culture. Information obtained from Ms. Gilmore indicates several important guidelines to remember when communicating with Navajo Parents:

1. Rarely establish eye contact.
2. The elder's opinions are greatly respected.
3. The tone of voice is kept at the same level.
4. There should be no pointing of the finger.
5. Do not interrupt others when they are speaking.
6. Wait your turn to speak (Gilmore, 1997).

Additional methods identified from the data were KUSD efforts to include parents as partners in their children's education. Also, taking steps to make parents feel welcomed and comfortable in the school setting were noted.

In response to question two (What are some techniques which have been used effectively working with parents in your area?), KUSD staff members predominately reported that the schools efforts to make parent contact was a powerful tool. Listed among these techniques was the effective use of home liaisons. Additionally, it was mentioned that teachers went on home visits with liaisons to enhance active communication between the school and parents. "Treating the parents with respect, encouraging their continued assistance in their child's education, and complimenting them on participation in their child's education" were considered essential in keeping good communication open between parents and the school. Other surveys indicated assisting parents in understanding their parental rights was considered a priority for KUSD special education staff.

Responses for question number three (What elements could be added to strengthen the school to parent interaction?), suggested to continue to build on already established techniques. A Native American administrator stated on their survey "I believe that KUSD Special Education Department has gone over and beyond in strengthening the school-parent interaction." The majority of staff responses mention repeatedly the efforts of the home liaisons in particular. All home liaisons employed by KUSD are Navajo from the local community, have in depth knowledge of traditional Navajo culture, and speak Navajo and English fluently.

Other suggestions for improvements that could be made were as follows:

- Training Parents specifically in their roles in Individual Education Plans and School Evaluation Teams.
- Obtaining through interviews and observations, viewpoints and feelings of parents.
- Communication through the media (such as announcing appropriate meetings).
- Guest Speakers for parent meetings who would give in depth training concerning parental rights, early intervention, and transition plans.
- All teachers should be required to make personal contact with parents even if there is no apparent intervention needed. This will keep the door of communication open.
- Activities taught at school that would have a parent participation component included at home.
- Provide transportation for parents if needed.

Parental Participant Results

Parental responses to question one (Have you had any challenges in communicating or getting assistance to meet your child's educational needs because of the rural setting you live in?) indicated that the majority of parents (kindergarten - eighth grade) were satisfied with the communication from their child's special education teacher. One parent of a high school student revealed that communication difficulties increased with the age of their child. Intensifying the focus on parent involvement is an important need for students at secondary level. One study implies that more active involvement in decision making by parents at the high school level and special training concerning parental roles increases the feeling of partnership between secondary special education teams and parents (Taylor, 1992).

The parental responses to question two (What are some of the techniques the school district has successfully used in contacting or working with you for the benefit of your child?), expressed that KUSD efforts in meeting the transportation needs of exceptional students were greatly valued by the parents. Other valued services mentioned in the responses were the efforts of KUSD to connect families to special related services or even arrange special medical attention for their child through local agencies.

The responses to question three (What elements could be added to possibly strengthen the school to parent interaction in your opinion in your rural area?) disclosed the importance of the KUSD home liaisons. Because of limited telephone service many parents are dependent on the home liaisons as their primary source of communication concerning their children's program. One parent said, "The school has come out to my home to explain what kind of services are given to my child at school." Other responses from in town parents indicated parents were contacted by phone or personally by the home liaison or teachers.

Additional methods that parents suggested that may strengthen school interactions were as follows:

- Keep a log book which would travel to and from school each day for parents
- and teachers to write notes back and forth.
- Have more informational meetings.
- Provide more pamphlets and handouts and awareness training for parents.

Conclusion

As indicated in the data, awareness of cultural values and discourse differences between English speakers and Navajo speakers are a fundamental concern to KUSD. The district is cognizant of their responsibility to provide information to parents in their primary language. Home liaisons are primarily used to insure that the parents of exceptional children are familiar with their parental rights. Additionally, the home liaisons establish personal contact with parents to make sure parents are informed in detail of their child's program.

Information gathered during the interview process from administrators and special education staff indicate that the KUSD staff are sensitive to the continued needs of parents of exceptional children. KUSD demonstrates a willingness to provide on going training for the parents of exceptional children.

The data also reflects that parents who have exceptional children enrolled in KUSD were generally pleased with the communication efforts of the school district. The parents also recognized that the home liaisons are instrumental in providing knowledge about their child's program in their primary language. The data also revealed that parents of exceptional children feel informed of their parental rights, but would welcome additional training in the area of special education parental rights and programs.

KUSD continues to provide consistent services to special education students. Presently five home liaisons travel daily throughout the 30 mile radius of KUSD to communicate the needs of students to their parents. KUSD embraces the Navajo culture to better enhance the education of all the students in the Kayenta area. KUSD realizes its responsibility to parents to provide open two-way communication for parents, create a welcoming environment and take into consideration the ruralness, unique language, and culture of the families whom it serves.

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Ellen Ratcliff, M. Ed.
Southeastern Louisiana University
Hammond, Louisiana

TRIPLE JEOPARDY: DISABLED, AT-RISK, AND LIVING IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

. The problems facing students with disabilities residing in rural communities extend beyond the school environment. Personal problems experienced by children and youth outside the classroom and school environment tend to have an effect on their ability to learn. These issues combined with living in a sparsely populated rural community, contribute to students with disabilities being at-risk for academic and social failure. Physical, mental, and sexual abuse, neglect, depression and suicide, dropping out of school, adolescent pregnancy, alcohol and substance abuse, unemployed parents, poverty, and rising crime rates are some of the primary difficulties these youngsters may be struggling with on a daily basis (Finn, 1993; Helge, 1990; Sherman, 1992).

Further complications arise when children and youth with disabilities live in rural communities. A great number of rural communities have lost their local schools due to consolidation. Furthermore, many rural communities have underfunded their schools due to a shrinking tax base. Therefore, rural schools are unable to provide as many courses and programs as their urban counterparts (DeYoung 1993; Hodgkinson, 1994; Sherman, 1992). Wages in rural communities for service and manufacturing are usually 25% less than in urban areas (Chynoweth & Campbell, 1992, p.2). This has resulted in young adults moving away to seek better opportunities in metropolitan areas, and the rural community becoming more impoverished and isolated. Children and youth with disabilities living in rural areas are at additional risk of failure in school and society when their rural community is struggling with these problems.

In addition, students with disabilities are even more vulnerable of being at-risk for failure when their special education teacher is not certified and/or is not knowledgeable of the problems these youngsters face on a daily basis. Boe, Cook, Kaufman, & Danielson (1996) indicated that there is a tremendous demand for fully-certified special education teachers. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the demand will be met in the near future. Recruitment and retention of special education teachers for rural school districts is very difficult. Because of a small tax base, many rural school districts offer lower salaries. Therefore qualified teachers usually seek employment in urban areas before resorting to rural areas. Often special education teachers who are hired in rural school districts are younger, have less experience, and possess a Master's Degree less often (Hodgkinson, 1994). Even if teachers are qualified, they soon discover that they were not properly trained to handle the social and emotional problems associated with their students' disabilities (Morgan, 1994). Most special education teacher preparation programs focus on theoretical or pedagogical approaches. Therefore little attention is focused on the specific needs that students with disabilities have outside the classroom. Additionally, teachers receive little training regarding the unique challenges that exist in rural communities (Merrell, Pratt, Forbush, Jentzsch, Nelson, Odell, & Smith, 1994).

At-Risk Module Description

A learning module that focuses on the unique problems of at-risk students with disabilities residing in rural communities has been developed for preservice teachers at the undergraduate and graduate levels. This module has been integrated and implemented successfully for the past three years in an introductory special education course. The module has been presented to undergraduate students majoring in special education, elementary and secondary education, and communication and speech disorders. Graduate level students seeking add-on or alternate certification and a master's degree in special education also participate in the learning module.

The At-Risk Module is presented using an expository format. Implementation of the module requires at least one 50 minute class period for undergraduate students and two hours during a three-hour evening period for graduate level students. Before the module is implemented, assessment data is collected on their prior knowledge of teaching at-risk children and youth by answering items on a short objective test. This test requires that students respond to ten true-false statements and complete two short-answer questions. Students are evaluated at the completion of the module to determine mastery of objectives using the same test format. Upon completion of the posttest, students are asked to complete a module evaluation form.

Specifically, the At-Risk Module has six objectives. At the conclusion of the module, preservice teachers will be: (a) knowledgeable of the definition, "at-risk" on the federal and state level, (b) familiar with the characteristics associated with at-risk special education students, (c) knowledgeable of the problems associated with teaching at-risk special education students, (d) familiar with federal, state, and local agencies that provide assistance for at-risk special education students and their families, (e) knowledgeable of methods that develop positive parent/professional partnerships as a source of prevention and intervention, and (f) knowledgeable of academic and interdisciplinary intervention approaches. This learning module also provides information that will increase the student's awareness of the unique barriers to effective service delivery in rural areas. It provides special resources and empirically proven interventions that will insure that additional services can be provided effectively and efficiently.

Components of the At-Risk Module

Federal and State Definitions. A review of the literature indicates that there is no precise definition for the term, "at-risk." The Goals 2000: Educate America Act identifies a student who is at-risk as one "who, because of limited English proficiency, poverty, race, geographic location, or economic disadvantage, faces a greater risk of low educational achievement or reduced academic expectations"(U.S. House of Representative Report 102-446, pp.99-100). Other definitions point to students who are not prepared to be employed successfully as adults. Currently being "at-risk" results from certain predisposing factors that affect a student's personal life and behavior, and interacts with the school, its culture, and its practices within the context of the community (Finn, 1993; Helge, 1990; Pallas, Natriello, & McDill, 1989; Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989).

Even though there is a general consensus concerning the definition for the term "at-risk," complications arise in identifying children who are at risk at the state level. An examination of five states in the southwestern region (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, & Texas) indicates that four states adopted definitions of being at-risk if the individual is unable of being a successful participant in life. Texas offers a more specific definition for being at-risk that includes unsatisfactory performance on standardized tests, limited English proficiency, victim of child abuse, delinquent conduct, course failure, and/or homelessness (Texas Education Agency, 1991). Because this learning module was presented in the state of Louisiana, only the state's operational definition and its criteria for identifying children who are at-risk was presented. Operational definitions of the term "at-risk" for any state may be obtained by contacting the state educational agency.

Characteristics Associated with At-Risk Special Education Students. A study conducted by the National Rural Development Institute compared incidences of various at-risk student conditions (Helge, 1990). Students with disabilities were identified to be at-risk if they were associated with one or more of the following categories: (a) substance abusers, (b) children experiencing depression, suicide attempts, and/or low self esteem, (c) victims of any type of child abuse, (d) children living in poverty, (e) children of an alcoholic or substance abuser, (f) children in a migrant family, (g) school dropout, (h) sexually active/ pregnant child, (i) children involved in criminal activity, or (j) children from minority and poor backgrounds. Most students at-risk can be linked to more than one of these categories. Typically, low self esteem and/or the existence of a dysfunctional family overlay the other categories.

It should be noted that teachers cannot rely totally on the above characteristics to identify at-risk special education students. Tompkins & Deloney (1994) reported that some students may possess or display one or more of the above at-risk characteristics and require no additional assistance in the school. Other students may exhibit none of these characteristics and end up dropping out of school. Therefore special educators must take into consideration each student's personality and characteristics before making any type of determination that a student with a disability is at-risk of academic and social failure.

Highlighted in the learning module for preservice teachers is information pertaining to child abuse and neglect, depression/ suicide attempts, and students who drop out of school. Participants receive listed physical and behavioral indicators for all categories of child abuse and neglect, characteristics of depression in children, warning signs indicating that an individual could be suicidal, and characteristics of students who are potential dropouts from school. The listed indicators pertain to children living in rural areas in any region of the United States. Therefore this part of the module can be easily infused into any teacher preparation course. Preservice teachers at the undergraduate and graduate level have received this information.

There are other variables that contribute to special education students being at-risk for academic and social failure. School programs and instructional practices have a direct effect on student success or failure. In addition, the school and community context in which the programs and practices for students at-risk occur may also affect their success or failure. Tompkins & Deloney (1994) identified five rural school and community variables that can have an impact on students who are at-risk. These variables are: (a) generic rural school characteristics, (b) school size, (c) school norms, (d) generic rural community characteristics, and (e) community norms. These variables are discussed at length with preservice teachers at the graduate level.

Problems Associated With Teaching At-Risk Special Education Students. Many special education programs face unique problems just because they are located in rural school districts. Helge (1990) reported that vast land areas, sparsely populated areas, lack of transportation, and inadequate social services are just a few of the major obstacles that prevent adequate delivery of special education services. Furthermore, inadequate prenatal care and poor nutrition in impoverished rural areas for children of uneducated teenage mothers intensifies existing problems. Many service providers in rural areas feel isolated from other professionals and from staff development opportunities (Helge, 1990).

Problems associated with service delivery for at-risk special education students are discussed at length with graduate level preservice teachers. Many graduate level students reside in rural communities. Some students are employed as teachers or paraprofessionals in the school of the community where they live. They discuss their experiences and perceptions of rural special education service delivery and the relationship their rural school has developed with the community.

Resource Availability. It is generally accepted that having a disability often predisposes a student for being at-risk of academic and social failure.(Helge, 1990). This notion is compounded when the student lives in a sparsely populated rural community. Often special education teachers in rural communities feel unprepared to address some of the personal problems students with disabilities bring to school on a daily basis. Teachers commonly feel inadequate in their ability to assist their students. Often the nearest town that can provide the appropriate service is 30 to 40 miles away. Special education teachers in rural communities can no longer work alone. They must begin forming partnerships with parents, community leaders, and school administrators in accessing resources (Wood, 1992).

Undergraduate and graduate level students are provided a list of national, state, and local organizations that may assist in providing services outside the school environment. National organizations and support groups that are concerned with child abuse and neglect, and depression and suicide in children are highlighted. State service agencies that will assist schools located in the State of Louisiana are provided to participants of this learning module. A separate list of local service agencies located in the surrounding rural areas of the university are also supplied to students. In addition, local and national hotline telephone numbers for individuals seeking assistance with alcohol or drug abuse, a runaway child, homelessness, rape, child abuse, and suicide are included. A separate list of toll-free telephone numbers that provides easy access to specific national charitable and funding organizations (e.g., American Kidney Fund, Exceptional Family Information Network, Hear Now Funding Assistance for Hearing Aids, National Spinal Cord Injury etc.) are included in the provided resource handout. Students also receive a state resource sheet for the State of Louisiana which was provided by the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY). This fact sheet lists the organization or program name, address, telephone number(s) and contact person who will assist in providing services for children and youth with disabilities.

Methods To Develop Positive Parent/Professional Partnerships. The involvement of parents in the design and implementation of educational programs for at-risk children with disabilities residing in rural communities is essential for program success. Capper (1993) stated that low-income parents living in rural communities want to be actively involved in their child's schooling, but they do not have the time nor the energy to participate. Hornby (1989) proposed a model for parent participation based on recognition of parental strengths and needs. Hornby reported that parents commonly demonstrate strengths in their ability to provide information, support, resources, and leadership. Possible areas of parental need are their inability to communicate effectively, be in consistent contact with the school, be knowledgeable of current parenting practices, and be knowledgeable of parent counseling. Models such as Hornby's provides a framework that could increase teachers knowledge of the contributions that parents can make in developing a positive partnership. Graduate level students participating in the learning module are introduced to Hornsby's proposed model.

Positive parent-teacher partnerships have a significant effect on the amount of support parents give to special education and related services in the rural community. The most important step special education teachers can take in developing positive relationships with parents is to establish solid communication lines between the school and home. (Gartland, 1992; O'Shea, O'Shea, & Nowocien, 1992) . Graduate level students participating in the learning module receive information detailing specific strategies that will promote positive written and telephone communication between teachers and parents (Gartland, 1992).

Academic and Interdisciplinary Intervention Approaches. A review of the literature suggests that there are three instructional methods that are empirically proven to bring about positive learning results for students with disabilities in self-contained and regular classroom settings (Larrivee,1989). Numerous studies have found that direct instruction is an effective instructional approach in reading and math for students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers (Carnine & Kinder,1985; Gersten, Becker, Heiry, & White, 1984; Stein & Goldman, 1980). Direct instruction refers to explicit instruction that is planned and presented by the teacher. Concepts are presented in sequential order of difficulty. Teachers model correct behavior, closely monitor student performance, and provide immediate positive corrective feedback during learning activities.

Cooperative learning is another effective and empirically proven instructional approach for teaching at-risk special education students (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). For the purpose of this learning module, cooperative learning has been defined as students working in small groups (three to four members). Teachers serve more as facilitators to group learning. Students are assessed by each other first and then by the teacher.

Peer tutoring is the third approach described to preservice teachers. Greenwood (1991) reported that classwide peer tutoring consistently had positive effects on student academic performance and the attitudes of those who tutored. Teachers have reported that peer tutoring increases their direct teaching time. It also has served as a motivational system for students to become peer tutors (Larrivee, 1989).

The educational approaches just described offer effective instructional assistance. However, effective delivery of services for exceptional students who are at-risk for academic and social failure require more than just the expertise of a special education teacher. It requires the synergistic efforts of a team composed of professionals, parents, and rural community members who can better meet the specific needs of individuals with disabilities. A description of the advantages and disadvantages of team collaboration in rural areas is presented to both graduate and undergraduate students.

Often a team approach may not be advantageous in rural communities. An alternative liaison model may be implemented instead (Morgan, 1994). The liaison model relies on one individual to coordinate and communicate the activities and progress of the student to all team members. Usually the self-appointed liaison is a noninstructional member of the team (e.g., social worker, school counselor, community member). The liaison model can be implemented without additional costs to the rural school district. This model requires more time of one team member. Its greatest disadvantage is that team members do not communicate among each other as they would if all members were meeting at one specified time. The liaison model is introduced to undergraduate and graduate preservice teachers. Again, more details are presented to graduate level students due to their involvement in the schools.

Conclusion

Over the past three years, 781 undergraduate and graduate students have participated in the At-Risk Module. Evaluation responses have been positive. A majority of the module's participants have stated that they had no prior knowledge of children who were at-risk of school and social failure. Furthermore, they reported that they would be able to use the content and provided materials of the module in their future special education classrooms. Many participants commented that more time should be provided to present the information contained within the module. They also asked for more information concerning students who are at-risk.

This module has provided undergraduate and graduate preservice teachers with valuable information about students with disabilities being at-risk for additional failure in their rural communities. It is clear that students are eager to receive more information about this special population of children and youth. Teacher preparation programs should provide more training for both levels of preservice teachers. Without appropriate training, rural schools and communities will continue to keep their students with disabilities in triple jeopardy.

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Denise Cutbirth
Beverly Benge
Stillwater, Oklahoma

USING Q METHODOLOGICAL STUDIES TO INVESTIGATE ATTITUDES OF EDUCATORS AND OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TOWARD INCLUSION

While exceptional individuals of many kinds have been identified by their ordinary fellow human beings since the beginning of recorded history, until the nineteenth century few attempts were made to teach them (Hewett & Forness, 1977). As the rights of these exceptional individuals were realized, special education evolved as a comprehensive attempt to deliver educational services to children with disabilities. The number of students with disabilities receiving special instruction and services in schools in the United States on any given day is currently about 4.4 million, representing around 6.5% of the total school-age population (U.S. Dept. of Education, 1991).

The mainstreaming model of instruction, used extensively in the 1970's and 1980's, was designed to meet the mandate of IDEA in providing education for children with disabilities. The failure of the mainstreaming model to meet the intent of federal legislation (Meyen & Skrtic, 1995) has resulted in the current inclusive movement to include more children with special needs in regular education classrooms. The 17th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of IDEA revealed that during the last five years regular class placement for special needs students has increased by ten percentage points, while resource room placement has decreased. Currently, 71.5 percent of students requiring special education services are now receiving some proportion of their education in general education classes (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 1996). More school districts today are educating students in general education classrooms rather than the traditional pull-out or resource class programs.

With this increased number of general education placements, the need to understand the educational environment into which children with disabilities are placed and expected to thrive likewise increases. Although extensive research has been done on inclusion, examining the view students with disabilities take toward regular education and the view teachers have of inclusive educational practices may provide insight into the effect of inclusion upon a free, appropriate public education. The purpose of this paper is to review two research studies delineating the perceptions of the primary participants within the inclusion process, students and teachers.

THEORY

The increasing number of general education placements for students with disabilities under the inclusion model warrants a careful study of the classroom environment into which these children are being placed. Students do not view inclusion in the same way as adults and should be consulted about academic programming. If success and failure to learn are at least partly attributed to learners, then the students' perceptions of teaching practices need to be discerned (Blumenfeld, Hamilton, Bossert, Wessels, & Meece, 1983). Assessment of classroom interaction through the students' perceptions is highly valid since they are the targets of teacher behavior and their (subjective) experience is what really counts (Babad, 1990). For example, one research study found that certain teaching adaptations that seem desirable and were commonly used by educators proved less desirable to students. These teaching style adaptations included using different textbooks, using different tests, and modifying homework assignments. Students preferred adaptations, however, in teacher interaction, including teachers working more closely with students. High achievers were more likely to prefer teaching adaptation than were low achievers. Students who most needed adaptations, therefore, were more likely to prefer teachers who did not make adaptations (Vaughn, Schumm, Niarhos and Gordon, 1993).

In addition to students' perceptions, teachers' attitudes impact teacher behavior and resultant student behavior and achievement within a classroom. In a study investigating attitudes of general education teachers toward students with learning disabilities included in their classrooms, teachers expressed negative reactions to inclusion. They felt that students with learning difficulties should fit in with the educational program implemented for the class as a whole and not receive a specially designed, individualized program (Schumm, Vaughn, Gordon & Rothlein, 1994). Since students are placed in special education because of an inability to be successful in an unmodified general education curriculum, success of an inclusive placement seems dependent on general education teachers' ability and willingness to make adaptations to accommodate individual differences. Forcing students with learning difficulties to fit in with whole class instruction seems unlikely to lead to a successful placement and could be educationally detrimental to a student with a disability.

Concurrent with the impact of the perceptions of students and teachers, educational setting may influence the success of inclusive placements. Data has suggested that rural students are more at risk for academic and behavioral problems than urban and suburban students (Huebner & Wise, 1992). Research has shown that enrolling students with disabilities in regular classes resulted in a high rate of failure and dropout among this population (Zigmond & Thornton, 1985). Within a rural setting, the practice of inclusion is not always implemented with the array of support services available in settings with larger populations. Inclusive placement may be harder, therefore, to successfully attain for rural students with disabilities.

Educational practitioners and researchers have become aware of the importance of student and teacher perceptions of performance as determinants of behavior (Levine and Wang, 1983). In order to explore the social world in which the school exists and the beliefs and attitudes that provide the basis for interpreting interventions in special education, the need exists to rely on other than empirical, objective methods. The use of interpretive, subjective research methods permits examination of ideas such as intentionality, consciousness, belief systems, and mental states in order to enrich understanding of these instructional issues in special education. According to Meyen and Skrtic (1995), ". . . people participating in programs define their own involvement. These definitions, not the ideas and wishes of program planners, determine how participants act toward a program and its effect on them." Subjective research employs a phenomenological, constructivist perspective, where the meaning of social reality is perceived as created within a specific context of social interaction (Reid, Robinson & Bunsen, 1995).

METHOD

Investigation of the perceptions of students and teachers concerning inclusive educational classrooms was accomplished using Q method techniques. Employing both quantitative correlational and factor-analytic techniques with an in-depth qualitative search for subjective meaning, Q methodology allows respondents to self-define tacit knowledge (McKeown & Thomas, 1988).

Subjects. Forty students, ages twelve through nineteen, took part in the first study. All were enrolled in a rural school district. Students included those currently served in the special education categories of specific learning disability, serious emotional disturbance, and mental retardation, as well as students from regular education. All of the students with disabilities have been served within special education programs for at least two years. None of the students has ever been served solely in a special education setting; all have been included for at least a portion of the day in inclusive education classrooms.

In the second study, teachers with elementary, middle school, secondary and higher education experience from both metropolitan and rural school districts, preservice teachers, and administrators were invited to participate. Fifty-nine educators and preservice teachers responded, with 41 percent of the sample being directly associated with special education.

Instruments. The list of statements for the Q-sort instrument in each study was developed from the domain of inclusive educational practice and theory. A population of items called a concourse (Brown, 1980) was drawn from literary sources. Each concourse was reviewed by student and teacher representatives respectively. Conventional items, the statements from literature and theory, and naturalistic items, the statements gathered from representative review, were combined to form what is termed a hybrid or mixed sample (McKeown & Thomas, 1988).

Each concourse was categorized for aid in interpretation. The students' concourse was defined by the categories curriculum, peer interaction, teacher interaction, teaching style, learning style, and self-concept. The teachers' concourse represented statements concerning academic aspects, socialization factors, legal rights issues, and integrative principles.

Procedure. The Q-sorts were administered on an individual basis. Respondents were asked to rank all items in the concourse until all opinion statements lay on a continuum from most like to most unlike their perceptions about inclusion. A distribution matrix was provided to facilitate the Q-sorting. An important step in Q methodology after data are analyzed is the confirming interview (Brown, 1980). Participants whose Q-sorts had extreme loadings, either high or low, were interviewed to determine if the interpretation of the Q-sort accurately reflected individual points of view.

RESULTS

Once all respondent Q-sorts were collected, data were analyzed using three statistical procedures: correlation, factor analysis, and computation of factor scores. Initially, the sorts were coded and entered into the computer program pcq3 by Stricklin (1993). A correlation matrix was computed for each study, reflection was performed, and factors were identified for varimax rotation. The presence of factors represents a unique point of view (McKeown & Thomas, 1988) and indicates persons who rank-ordered the statements in essentially the same fashion.

In the student study, theoretical profiles fell into six factor arrays. The six factors were designated as Competent Student, Separatist Student, Confident Student, Nonconformist Student, Paradoxical Student, and Curricular Student. The theoretical profile of students on Factor A indicated a comfort level in inclusive regular education classes. The Competent Student perceived that the requisite ability to learn, function, and respond are present in this setting. Students on Factor B envisaged a separate system of class rules for different students. The Separatist Student also admitted to being distracted by what was happening in the classroom environment. Students on Factor C, The Confident Student, were able to comprehend class material at the rate it was presented. They felt comfortable around the other students in class and perceived themselves as accepted group members. Students on Factor D did not feel confident in their ability to succeed in school, nor did they indicate recognition of personal responsibility for this fact. The Nonconformist Student did not see the work in inclusive classrooms as interesting or useful. The profile of students on Factor E showed that they too did not feel schoolwork was interesting. The Paradoxical Student felt that the teacher did not help them correctly begin assignments but did feel that the teacher liked having the student in class. Students on Factor F, The Curricular Student, were the only participants who stated that they felt the schoolwork was interesting. They did not feel that other members of the inclusive classroom listened to ideas they might have. All students loading on this factor were categorized Mentally Retarded.

In the teacher study, analysis yielded a four factor solution. The four factors were designated Philosophists, Local Decision-Makers, Individualists, and Socialists. Philosophists were strongly idealistic, supported inclusion as a means of promoting acceptance for all students within the school community, and felt teachers are obligated to meet all needs of children within the general education setting. Local Decision-Makers placed premium importance on the unfairness of legally forced placements and desired to retain local control of all educational placements. Additionally, they would place special needs students in general education classes only if the student's ability allowed equal performance on the same assignments as nondisabled students. Individualists, as their name implies, gave prominence to the individual rights of each student and would decide placement on a singular, personal basis only. Individualists, unlike Philosophists, saw successful placement of some children in general education classrooms as possible while promoting resource room placement for other children. Finally, Socialists viewed the need for socialization as the primary impetus for inclusive placement; placement may be in an inclusive classroom or a resource room depending upon the social needs of the student.

DISCUSSION

Several conclusions were signified from the student study. The majority of students in the study (82%) indicated negative perceptions of membership in an inclusive classroom setting. This dissatisfaction was expressed by Competent Students, Separatist Students, Confident Students, Nonconformist Students, Paradoxical Students, and Students, Confident Students, Nonconformist Students, Paradoxical Students, and Curricular Students. None of the six factors supported full inclusion.

Additionally, negative perceptions cut across all six concourse categories. Curriculum, peer interaction, teacher interaction, teaching style, learning style, and self-concept were all rated as areas of concern. Examples of student distress in each area included the following: schoolwork did not seem interesting or important to present or future lives, other students did not listen to their ideas, the teacher had different rules for different students, instructional material was not presented in a way that promoted understanding and was presented too quickly for understanding, there were a number of distractions that interfered with learning, and they were not able to cope with school as easily as other students.

Overall, the perceptions of special education students and general education students toward regular education (inclusive) classrooms showed some continuity of belief. Regular education students identified with five of the six factors. Special education students identified with six of the six factors. The perceptions of students with disabilities toward inclusive regular education classes were more negative than positive. The perceptions of students without disabilities toward these classes were equally negative.

Several conclusions were drawn from the study of teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. As in the student study, no factor identified with the placement of all children in general education classrooms. Individualists, Philosophists and Socialists expressed agreement that children need a wide range of possible placements to accommodate individual traits, while local decision-makers did not support inclusion at all.

A second conclusion concerning beliefs of preservice and inservice teachers was determined. Although logic would seem to indicate that experience within the classroom would create a more realistic and therefore different perspective concerning inclusion of children with disabilities in the general education classrooms, this proved not to be the case. Graduate and undergraduate respondents loaded on all four factors identified within this study. Approximately 50 percent of the significant loadings were undergraduates and fifty percent were from the graduate segment of the sample.

As to the differences between the beliefs of general education teachers and special education teachers, more special education teachers identified with the philosophist viewpoint; more teachers with general education certification identified with the local decision-makers. No factor, however, was completely identified with either specialization and no clear conclusion can be drawn to indicate major differences between the beliefs of special and general education teachers. It seems evident that decisions concerning placement of children with disabilities are based more on subjective beliefs than on a field of teaching specialization.

Implications of these studies are several. Inclusion continues to be a very divisive issue in education. These two studies have verified that students and teachers have fundamental problems with inclusive classrooms. Whether the student was served in general or special education, whether the teacher was certified in general or special education, preservice or inservice, the only clear consensus of viewpoint was that full inclusion was impractical in serving the needs of students.

The inclusive movement appears to be more than a temporary reform which has appeared on the educational scene. A restructuring of the separate general and special education systems into a unitary system of public education has been proposed. If barriers separating students with disabilities and students without disabilities are to be fully eliminated, instruction and other services must be provided in natural settings where all students are included (Meyen & Skrtic, 1995). Within inclusive classrooms, students indicated the perception that membership was socially and educationally unsatisfactory. Their lives are being negatively affected today, as some are being placed in general education classes with untrained teachers who are angry at being forced to receive within their class a student with disabilities. The theoretical implications of this research, within the setting of public education, imply that there appears to be no one item or group of items to fix in order to improve inclusive regular classroom membership for students or teachers. Even more serious, however, than the unease that this view may cause is the implication that there is no clear direction to improve the theoretical model upon which special education is based. Just as in the past mainstreaming failed to meet the needs of students with disabilities, these studies appear to confirm the inability of inclusive settings to meet the needs of special students. The debate concerning mainstreaming was far less divisive than the inclusion debate because, although mainstreaming was radical for its time, it was far less ambitious than inclusion and there was less to lose in terms of hard-won special education rights, resources, and recognition (Meyen & Skrtic, 1995).

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Cheryl L. Metz, M.A., CCC-SLP
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001

Reaching Children with Autism in Anywhere, USA

Autism is one of the most challenging disorders in the special education spectrum. Today, the word Autism conjures a picture in most peoples' minds. Some envision Dustin Hoffman's portrayal of "Rainman"; others view individuals with Autism as characters depicted in television movies or magazine articles.

While the general population is at least familiar with this disability, few understand the breadth of Autism-Spectrum Disorders. On one end of the spectrum we see an institutionalized individual, labeled with a code of Autism and severe/profound Mental Retardation. Unable to communicate, either gesturally or verbally, he exhibits a constant state of frenzy, demonstrated by screaming, running without a purpose, flapping his arms up and down, or worse, biting his flesh until raw and bleeding, and/or poking his eye(s) until he blinds himself. On the other end of the spectrum, we find Dr. Temple Grandin (1995) an individual with Autism and a Ph.D., who designs cattle facilities around the world but also finds time to crusade for people with Autism. She frequently lectures at state, national, and international Autism conferences sharing her personal experience and knowledge with interested parents and professionals (Grandin).

Definitions by professionals in the field may vary slightly, but most agree with the core description. To assist the readers' understanding of the complexities of Autism, Dr. Eric Schopler (1990,p.1) describes Autism best, as:". . . a brain dysfunction [which causes] . . . a lifelong disability that prevents individuals from properly understanding what they see, hear and otherwise sense. This results in severe problems of social relations, communication and behavior." Many authors agree that Schopler's words give us the key to Autism". . . what they see, hear and otherwise sense"(Grandin, 1995; Trevarthen, Aitken, Papoudi & Robarts, 1996).

Sensory System Deficits

Visual Deficits

Poor eye-contact or intense staring are illustrated by individuals who cover their eyes, light-filter (staring at reflections or lights through flickering fingers). The use of peripheral vision is preferable to foveal vision (i.e., eye-gaze is locked to the outside edge of eye, often in combination with a head tilt).

Auditory Deficits

Hypersensitivity to sound is seen as the student covers ears, rocks, screams when sounds are offensive. Sleep problems often exist due to nocturnal noises that go unnoticed by most of us (i.e., dogs barking, sirens, or other environmental noises). Hyposensitivity to sound is also seen as these children are often suspected of being deaf. They, at times,seem oblivious to loud sounds.

Tactile Defensive/Tactually Defensive

Light touch/contact is usually alerting but may also be painful to a child with Autism because of a faulty message being sent to the brain. Conversely, deep pressure is usually calming and reassuring (Grandin, 1995). Tactual sensitivity is sometimes seen by a withdrawal from touch. However, some children will seek deep pressure from hugs, crawling under the mattress or sofa cushions.

Olfactory Deficits

Hypersensitivity to odors is exhibited by negative or aggressive reaction to certain smells or the child may be drawn to particular odors. Typically this is the child who smells everything.Hyposensitivity to smells is more dangerous. Students are at risk for inhaling toxic fumes or gases and the smell does not cue the danger factor.

Gustatory Deficits

Hypersensitivity to taste; which may be due to oral tactile sensitivity often results in a limited food and drink menu. Administering medicine to this child can be very challenging. Hyposensitivity to taste places these children at risk. On the positive side they are usually good eaters. However, the will eat non-edibles as well as edibles and drink any liquid they find (including toilet bowl water, bleach, etc.).

Vestibular System Deficits

Manifestations of an impaired vestibular system are displayed through self-stimulation (rocking, jumping, spinning in circles). Through physical activity the vestibular system can be targeted(Grandin, 1995).

Proprioception System Deficits

These children frequently have a lack of body awareness. They use another person's hand to obtain wants. Unusual use of body (toe-walking, weak grasp) is common. And they frequently charge into other people or things. However, even though many of these children appear awkward, some are surprisingly agile and fearless of falling.

SUCCESSFUL TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

The information shared here is from techniques and strategies utilized successfully by parents and the author for more than 20 years. As most professionals who work with this population have learned, what works with one child does not necessarily work with another. Use whatever works, save the rest for the student you'll have next year.

WORKING WITH LOW-FUNCTIONING INDIVIDUALS

Turn-taking activities

The use of turn-taking skills is the foundation of communication and socialization(Koegel & Koegel, 1995). Turn-taking also helps students learn *wait time* which is the greatest gift you can give parents of these children. You can teach turn-taking skills to most children by using the following strategies:

1. Interaction with self-stimulatory materials
   a. "Your turn, my turn" activities with clacker balls, strip of paper, "fooze" ball, string, etc.
   b. begin with rapid return of object to child, extend your turn by a second or two each time (developing "wait time")
   c. imitation of student's stimming (rocking, light filtering, spinning, etc.)

2. A-Z Generalization of turn-taking skills to appropriate activities(with items of interest)at home and school
   a. switch toys
   b. action toys
   c. toys that make noise
   d. toys that open/give reinforcer inside
   e. spinning or sparkling items
   f. ball activities (initially you may need one person behind the child to "help" interact with a third person)
   g. turning pages of a favorite book
   h. pushing buttons on a calculator
   i. you give the dog a treat, I give the dog a treat
   j. scribbling/coloring
   k. hide favorite items in a bowl of raw beans or rice (Take turns finding them)
   l. cutting strips of paper
   m. pasting small pieces of paper on a larger pg.
   n. putting items in a box, bucket, container
   o. 3 piece form puzzle (my turn, your turn)
   p. match shape to shape, color to color, size to size, etc.
   q. sort grossly different items (e.g. 3 pencils and 3 wooden beads - turn-taking - you do all 6, then he does all 6)
   r. sort letters and numbers (5 sets of magnetic letters)
   s. tie streamers to an electric fan
   t. metal tray or cookie sheet where magnet letters can be matched to outlined letters containing personal information on the student
   u. assembly tasks (don't disassemble child's work in front of him; his work has value)
   v. imitating specific marks on a paper (you may

want to begin with a template
- w. spell family names with magnetic letters on the refrigerator (occasionally move one out of place and see if he replaces it
- x. pushing keys on a typewriter or computer
- y. match to a recessed jig (two meat trays - one with cut-outs, one solid)
- z. start simple go to more complex (i.e. jigs to out-lined representation)

Choice-making activities

Teaching a child to make choices eliminates the frustration that is often accompanied when a child is unable to say what he wants or needs (Brill, 1994; Koegel & Koegel, 1995). This frustration is usually shown via a temper tantrum. Frequently unwanted behaviors are eliminated by teaching a child to show parent/the care giver/teacher what he wants. Choices may be indicated through eye-gaze, his hand over your hand, pointing, or verbalizing).

1. Home Activities
    - a. clothing (choice between two shirts, two pair of pants, different colored socks)
    - b. foods (two breakfast cereals, mustard or ketchup on his sandwich)
    - c. VCR movies
    - d. recreational activities (objects to represent different activities, photographs of child doing different activities, etc.)
    - e. restaurants (logos from newspaper coupons))
2. School Activities
    - a. any of the above
    - b. snack time or meals are the best opportunity
    - c. choose between toys at playtime
    - d. choose color of paper for art project
    - e. choose book for story time
    - f. choose song for music time
    - g. vending machines (chips, candy, drinks, etc.)
3. Generalize skills from school to home and visa versa (Grandma's house, restaurants, etc.)
    - a. ask parent(s) to observe the child in the classroom setting
    - b. ask parent(s) to share information about what the child does at home
    - c. try choice-making in other locations as well
    - d. if you discover something especially motivating to the child - SHARE THE INFO!
4. Impacting child's environment by giving him a reason to communicate (likes/dislikes)
    - a. make him choose between something he likes and something he hates (Power Rangers cartoons vs the news)
    - b. try to get him to participate in an activity he usually avoids or especially wants

    c. sabotage to encourage communication

5. Validate every communicative intent
    a. "thank you for telling me with your eyes/hand that you want a drink of water"
    b. when he starts to tantrum because you give him something you know he doesn't want, say "I see by your actions you are telling me you want . . ."
    c. extend your validation to include the following statement ". . .you can also tell me with your hand/mouth"

6. Expect more each time but don't make a big deal out of an unexpected response, some kids will shut down (experiment with expressive response vs matter-of-fact)

INCORPORATE MUSIC & MOTOR MOVEMENT IN EVERYTHING YOU CAN!

[I'M OUT OF ROOM, COME BY THE POSTER SESSION FOR STRATEGIES FOR HIGH FUNCTIONING INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM]

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Debbie House
Cynthia Boykin
Pam Yellin
Susan Breck
Diane Montgomery
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL SCHOOLS: PROJECT SUCCESS SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM COLLABORATIVELY ENABLING SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

The move to inclusive environments, those general classrooms that function as the primary setting for the instruction of all students (Stainback & Stainback, 1990), has placed considerable pressure on the preparation and continuing professional development of teachers within rural school districts. Beginning and practicing professionals need specialized training for the increasingly complex and diverse demands of public school teaching. Rural schools are often struggling with reduced public funds at a time when quality initial and continued professional training is fundamental to the success of a rapidly changing educational system. Although state officials often cite the need for increased professional development, rarely are such edicts followed with sufficient funding or policy to employ the needed changes.

Due to this changing paradigm in the rural educational arena regarding the concept of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) (Will, 1986), general education teachers feel that they have not been adequately prepared to meet such a wide variety of special needs (Lyon, Vaasson & Toomey, 1989: Villa & Thousand, 1995). Additionally, beginning teachers report an inadequate preparation for meeting the needs of students with disabilities. For example, in an analysis of data collected during the exit interviews of Oklahoma State University (OSU) general education student teachers over the last five years (1990-1995), a majority of these beginning teachers believed they needed more training regarding instructional strategies and the adaptations of materials to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

The passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1975 made available a free appropriate public education to nearly 4 million students with disabilities in the United States (Hardman, Drew, & Egan, 1996). Over twenty years later the population of students with disabilities has increased dramatically, primarily due to better assessment procedures, advances in medical technology, and changes made to the original version of Public Law 94-142. The most encompassing change to Public Law 94-142 came in 1990 when Congress amended the Education of Handicapped Children's Act (EHA) including Public Law 94-142 and renamed the law the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (P.L. 101-476). New provisions of IDEA not only extended services guaranteed students with disabilities, but it also broadened the scope of students who qualified for special services. The end result is that educators, regardless of age group or subject area taught, will come into contact with learners of diverse abilities.

It is estimated that 93 percent of children with disabilities are educated in regular education programs (Kowalski, 1995). Inclusive schools are typically places where students work in more flexible learning environments, with flexible curricula and instruction (Jakupcak, Rushton, Jakupcak, & Lundt, 1996; Schirmer, Casbon & Twiss, 1995). An inclusive school environment demands more collaboration and cooperative planning among administrators, parents, and all teachers and specialists involved in the student's education.

To prepare teachers for this diverse school setting, teacher education programs must restructure their approach to teacher training. Teachers who enter today's rural classrooms need extensive education in adapting curricula and instruction modifications to work effectively with all students in an inclusive setting. To support teachers in their endeavor to gain expertise in working with students with special needs, Project SUCCESS was implemented as a collaborative program between rural schools and the university.

The Collaborative: An Oklahoma Alliance

Research indicates that university faculty, district teachers, and students of college and public school greatly benefit from a collaborative school-university partnership training program (Cornett, 1995; Coulon & Byra, 1995; Cusimano, 1990). One model that responds to the demand for improved teacher preparation and development is the Professional Development School (PDS) model (Holmes, 1990). The PDS model is perceived to present multiple opportunities for practicing teaching to positively influence others who are preparing to teach (Pugach & Johnson, 1995). Waldron (1996) advocates the implementation of school-university partnerships to redefine teaching roles to support inclusive educational practices.

As a PDS initiative, Oklahoma State University began discussions with four area rural school districts to explore the possibility of developing a mechanism to employ a professional development school model. Stillwater Public School District is the largest of the four districts; Morrison Schools is the smallest district with mostly white families; Pawnee School District includes the largest proportion of minority families (18% American Indian); and Perkin-Tryon School District covers a large farming and ranching area. Although the four districts are considered proximal to the university, characteristic of rural districts, they have over 20 school buildings with nearly one hundred miles between the farthest ranging schools within these four districts.

When school-university alliances develop, there are several methods by which to define the teacher preparation and development work. It has been suggested that collaborative partnerships are most successful when the issues chosen for collaboration are not viewed as belonging to one or the other of the collaborators, but as "spanning the boundaries" between and among the institutions (Schlechty & Whitford, 1988, p. 193). Project SUCCESS was designed as one of several projects perceived as having the ability to span the concerns of all members of the alliance. Funding for this project was derived from two sources: (1) the Dean of the College of Education provided initial developmental funds to the Alliance, and (2) the Oklahoma State Department of Education IDEA, Part B to Stillwater Public Schools supported Project SUCCESS for the improvement of educational services to students with disabilities.

Project SUCCESS Purpose and Goals

The purpose of Project SUCCESS is to offer opportunities for various teachers to work together to share expertise, create ideas, and construct meaningful experiences for professional development. The teachers involved are special and general educators, both those already practicing and those preparing to practice at all levels (elementary, middle school, junior high and high school). The major goals of Project SUCCESS are to recruit and train participants to collaboratively design, develop, deliver, and evaluate a professional development course for mentor teachers who work extensively with student teachers. These goals are comprehensively outlined in Table 1.

Project SUCCESS Model

The Leadership Team, consisting of special and general educators in all content areas and grade levels, collaboratively developed and delivered the content of a three-hour graduate course designed to improve the instructional competencies required in meeting the needs of students with disabilities. This course specifically addresses concerns regarding the topical areas of inclusion, authentic assessment, families, technology and other areas identified by participants.

Results

A needs assessment was conducted among instructional staff at the four rural school districts. The survey was designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative information about quality teacher preparation, especially student teaching experiences. Teachers provided comments on their own student teaching experiences and what should be done to improve the OSU program. Additionally, respondents rank ordered, from 1 to 5 (with 1 representing the highest priority), personal concerns regarding curriculum and supervision issues. Approximately 80 surveys out of potentially 400 were collected for data analysis. Interestingly, the response rate differed dramatically by the size of the school. For example, one small elementary school participated at 100% (11 out of 11); whereas, there were two responses from a very large faculty at one of the high schools (3%).

Needs assessment data and Leadership Team discussions were analyzed for common trends regarding suggestions and concerns of the responding teachers.. Concerns included student teachers' seeming lack of knowledge regarding practical classroom procedures such as paperwork, time management, and extra duty assignments. Other concerns centered on some difficulties student teachers typically encounter in discipline and student/teacher relationships. Consistently, responses related to such concerns as spending more time instructing in classrooms, both during and prior to student teaching, greater effort to determine suitability for teaching prior to student teaching, and a more varied student teaching experience (i.e. multiple teachers and multiple subjects) were reported. The ranking section of the surveys shifted the focus specifically to curriculum and supervision issues. Areas of highest concern ranked in curriculum included, in order: (1) discipline, (2) knowledge of subject matter, (3) teaching styles, (4) diverse ability needs, and (5) teaching modifications. Supervision issues were ranked to reflect the highest concern in the order of: (1) classroom management, (2) professional ethics, (3) observation/feedback, (4) paperwork, and (5) professional development.

The professional development course was offered to university and public school faculties, student teachers, and parents. Participants were required to attend five out of sixteen workshops for one college credit, ten of sixteen for two, or fifteen for three hours of college credit. Courses could also be taken for continuing education units if desired. Each workshop was adapted to meet the needs of the Leadership Team who served as instructor, the topic of the concern addressed, and the teachers at the session location site. Teachers who chose to take the sessions for graduate credit kept reflective journals on their practice. Some of the topics for sessions include: Communication with Parents, Alphabet Soup: What is LRE & IEP's?, Teachers as Researchers, Modifications & Interventions, and Meeting the Needs of the Gifted Student.

The Opinions Relative to the Integration of Students with Disabilities (ORI) by Larrivee & Antonak (1993) was administered to all Leadership Team members and will be used to determine any changes in perceptions of the teachers who are attending the course components. The ORI measures the attitudes teachers have for students with disabilities in general classes. It contains 25 items that require the participant to respond according to his/her level of agreement or disagreement with the statement on a six point scale. Pre and post test scores, using the ORI will be analyzed for changes in teacher perceptions as a function of involvement in Project SUCCESS. Initial responses of the Leadership Team are presented in Table 2. The opinions of this particularly dedicated group of teachers can be interpreted to represent proponents of successful inclusion of students with disabilities into general classrooms.

Sessions have been held at varying school sites. The length of time in a group session varies depending on the topic of the session. Locations to date have included two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school in the Stillwater area. Attendance has been consistently lower than expected at all session sites. Ninety-eight percent of workshop evaluations have been favorable for those teachers who participate.

Conclusions

Project SUCCESS is a one-year grant to develop and deliver university coursework at the graduate level to promote the interaction and collaboration between university and schools, special education and general education, elementary and secondary, and beginning and practicing teachers. The developmental phase was overwhelmingly successful with 30 members of a Leadership Team from four rural school districts and the university who met regularly to design the series of 16 topical sessions with suggested classroom applications for each session. The Project has strong administrative support; teachers have chosen to meet after school instead of arranging for substitute teachers (who would have been paid for by the grant); the university arranged to allow course vouchers to be used to take the series for college credit. Yet, relatively few teachers take advantage of the sessions. The Leadership Team has assisted in the understanding of the relatively low response to the sessions. Reasons generated include little or no incentive for teachers (Oklahoma does not require a master's degree for continued teaching certification); excessive calendar demands in the spring of the year (state mandated testing, etc.); professional development points are easily acquired; and the individual sessions are believed to be isolated experiences rather than the core of an integrated program for teacher preparation and development. These reasons provide information to promote the long-term work of the Alliance in the development of professional development schools.

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Table 1
Project SUCCESS Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives for Project SUCCESS are summarized:	
GOAL I: To develop an infra-structure to design and deliver a course on needs of students with disabilities in the general classroom.	Objectives: To recruit and train participants for collaboration to occur between special education and general education in schools and the university.
GOAL II: To collaboratively develop a professional development course to be offered through OSU graduate credit.	Objectives: To identify content of course related the needs of students with disabilities who are included in general classrooms with general education teachers; To disseminate information and hold development conferences with Leadership Team members; To develop the course outline.
GOAL III: To collaboratively deliver the graduate course at a school site.	Objectives: To recruit participants from general and special education; To encourage peer collaborative teamwork; To deliver the course according to the course outline.
GOAL IV: To evaluate and disseminate the process and outcome of the project.	Objectives: To solicit input from the Alliance members and Leadership Team as related to the project; To collect qualitative and quantitative data for indicators of altered beliefs or behaviors; to disseminate the results of the project.

Table 2

Responses to Attitude Statements by Leadership Team Members (N=25)

Mean	Attitude Statement
4.04	1. Most students with disabilities (S w/D) will make an adequate attempt to complete their assignments
3.96	2. Integration of S w/D will necessitate extensive retraining of general classroom teachers.
4.44	3. Integration offers mixed group interaction that will foster understanding and acceptance of differences among students.
3.60	4. It is likely that S w/D will exhibit behavior problems in a general classroom.
3.25	5. Students with disabilities can best be served in general classrooms.
3.76	6. The extra attention S w/D require will be to the detriment of the other students.
4.28	7. The challenge of being in a general classroom will promote the academic growth of the student with a disability.
3.64	8. Integration of S w/D will require significant changes in general classroom procedures.
3.56	9. Increased freedom in the general classroom creates too much confusion for the student with a disability.
3.44	10. General classroom teachers have the ability necessary to work with S w/D.
2.72	11. The presence of students with disabilities will not promote acceptance of differences on the part of students without disabilities.
2.40	12. The behavior of students with disabilities will set a bad example S w/D.
3.28	13. The student with a disability will probably develop academic skills more rapidly in a general classroom than in a special classroom.
2.42	14. Integration of S w/D will not promote his or her social independence.
3.20	15. It is not more difficult to maintain order in a general classroom that contains a S w/D than in one that does not contain a S w/D.
2.84	16. Students W/D will not monopolize the general classroom teacher's time.
4.64	17. The integration of students with disabilities can be beneficial for students without disabilities.
3.04	18. Students with disabilities are likely to create confusion in the general classroom.
2.60	19. General classroom teachers have sufficient training to teach S w/D.
2.76	20. Integration will likely have a negative effect on the emotional development of the student with a disability.
4.64	21. Students with disabilities should be given every opportunity to function in the general classroom where possible.
2.36	22. The classroom behavior of the S w/D generally does not require more patience from the teacher than does the classroom behavior of the student without a disability.
4.32	23. Teaching S w/D is better done by special than by general classroom teachers.
2.72	24. Isolation in a special classroom has a beneficial effect on the social and emotional development of the student with a disability.
3.12	25. The S w/D will not be socially isolated in the general classroom.

Note: 1=the greatest disagreement and 6=the greatest agreement with the statement.

Virginia Anne Johnson, Ed.D., CRC
Sandra S. Parkerson, B.S.
University of Arkansas Research & Training
Center in Vocational Rehabilitation (ARTCVR)
Hot Springs, Arkansas

PRACTICAL MEASURES FOR ASSESSING WORK PERFORMANCE BEHAVIORS IN INDIVIDUALS WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES

INTRODUCTION

The Work Performance Assessment (WPA) and the Work Personality Profile (WPP) are evaluation components that can be used in conjunction with Vocational Coping Training (VCT) to create an assessment and training curriculum designed to target behaviors associated with job retention and advancement.

Together WPA and WPP form a comprehensive observational assessment designed to provide a useful and efficient alternative for individuals whose level of functioning, vocationally immaturity and lack of work experience make traditional multi-week vocational evaluation inappropriate and impractical. The two components are a cost effective alternative to elaborate mock-work environments such as sub-contract job stations that involve significant investments of time, effort and money. The WPA and WPP provide job coaches, work adjustment trainers, placement specialists and supervisors in the work place with information that can be used to successfully initiate and maintain competitive or supported employment. It also provides referral sources/requesting personnel with documentation of the need for resources to underwrite services (e.g., training, job coaching, supported employment, long-term follow-up).

Comprehensive observational assessment is a common type of prevocational assessment used with persons who are disabled in both rehabilitation facilities and school programs. It can be more effective for persons who are disabled than psychometrics normed on groups of non-disabled individuals. While work samples are better for measuring skills and aptitudes, comprehensive observational assessment is ideal for assessing work performance behaviors and work personality attributes. In fact, it is "...impossible to know the work personality unless one observes the individual functioning in an actual work situation or environment" (Barton, 1967). This type of assessment model has the following benefits:

1. Provides the opportunity to observe and evaluate in a natural setting or natural task where typical performance is more likely to be manifested than in a testing situation;
2. Conveys realism that can't be duplicated in other assessment techniques in relation to environmental or situational factors;
3. Minimizes anxiety produced by formal testing;
4. Allows evaluation in different situations (natural or manipulated) and variation of common work conditions without too much emphasis on efficient production;
5. Produces results that are more curriculum referenced, leading to better instructional planning;
6. Provides a more realistic view of performance (does he or she? rather than can he or she?);
7. Offers unique opportunity for training an individual at the time assessment occurs and within a real-life context;
8. Does not require a lot of equipment, materials or special physical space;

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9. Allows assessment of many more work behaviors that standardized vocational testing or work sample approaches;

10. Provides relevant information for rehabilitation planning with severely disabled individuals.

In keeping with the comprehensive observational assessment model, the WPA and WPP do not provide a simple division between "those who can make it" and "those who can't" on the continuum of employment success. WPA and WPP rating scales identify where individuals fall on the continuum and provides detailed information for training needs and placement decisions.

It is well established that reliability and validity for this type of assessment depend on two primary factors: (1) the quality of the rating scale used, and (2) training of test administrators to promote standardization of the stimulus conditions for eliciting the behaviors. Therefore, the design for WPA and WPP involved the following steps to standardize procedures:

1. Identifying specific skills or aspects of behavior
2. Defining the behaviors and levels of skill
3. Making the observation of each behavior quantifiable
4. Training for assessors making the observations

Although the limitations of rating scales and raters are ever present, comprehensive observational assessment can be highly effective when other types of vocational tests are inappropriate. The two assessment components described below offer a unique means of observing and assessing a person who is disabled in actual or near-actual work situations. WPA and WPP items were pilot-tested, analyzed, adapted, and field-tested for appropriateness and accuracy with individuals who are disabled. The assessment manuals, scoring software and demonstration video contain all materials needed to conduct each measure.

The Work Performance Assessment (WPA)

WPA is a simulation procedure designed to assess behavioral responses to nineteen common work demands. Assessment activities involve two work tasks, a teamwork activity and a socializing opportunity requiring about one hour to administer by a professional who assumes the role of a work supervisor. The simulation takes place in a quiet room using inexpensive, easily obtained materials. Groups of two can be rated in vivo and larger groups of four to six can be videotaped and scored later. The easy-to-use rating form creates a record of assets and limitations in specific behavioral terms. A total score representing an overall level of job retention and advancement skill is generated by calculating the proportion of behavioral criteria in responding to the nineteen work demands.

Research indicates the WPA items are consistent in the level of demand they present to test participants and can be scored reliably. The most reliable estimate of performance can be derived from multiple ratings (i.e., in vivo rating by the evaluator averaged with ratings by a trained rater from a videotape). A Demonstration Video for WPA Administrators is designed to increase reliability by enabling administrators to standardize their presentation of the nineteen work demands. The manual contains instructions on how to create the simulation and scoring directions.

The Work Personality Profile (WPP)

WPP is a work personality rating instrument that can be used wherever work related behavior is occurring (education and rehabilitation facilities and employment settings). WPP assesses those attributes that satisfy fundamental work role requirements (i.e., attitudes, values, habits, and behaviors essential to retaining a job and acquiring promotability potential. Benefits of this measure include its comprehensive coverage, behavioral orientation, diagnostic function and direct rating format. After observing a test participant in a work or work-like setting (i.e. following administration of the WPA), the 58 items can be rated in 5-10 minutes using a four-point scale. Results are reported on a profile form that includes 11 primary and 5 secondary work behavior categories. The manual contains administration instructions and master copies of the instrument, tally sheet and profile report form.

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Utilization of the WPA and WPP

Following administration of the WPA, test administrators may also want to complete the WPP. Although the WPP does not provide as much behavioral specificity as the WPA rating form, it corroborates WPA ratings. The WPA provides more behavioral specificity but the WPP lends itself to frequent administration to document progress during work study, internship or work training before employment, after placement during the sixty day follow up period, or every three months of ongoing supported employment. WPP's level of detail is sufficient to report progress or plan training to address deficiencies. WPA and WPP form a comprehensive observational assessment procedure across employment and pre-employment settings (e.g., high schools, colleges, vocational training and independent living programs, or job club programs). Use both the WPA and WPP (in that order), since most test participants will proceed to real work environments. When only the WPP is to be used, it must be possible to observe test participants engaged in work-like or work activities. Although each component is self-standing and can be used as a separate assessment activity, using both components provides comprehensive information.

Curriculum Implementation

The WPA and WPP form a comprehensive assessment component to use in conjunction with the training component Vocational Coping Training (VCT). Together these assessment and training components form a complete curriculum. The WPA and WPP determine if trainees acquired, maintained, and generalized work behaviors and attributes from VCT instructional activities to work situations. The first and last VCT training sessions can involve each trainee in pre-and post-test WPA assessments. The WPA scoring system makes it possible to tailor instruction for individuals and to group individuals with similar training needs because it identifies specific assets and limitations in work performance behaviors.

For some groups of trainees, it may be useful to identify the average pre- and post-training performance. Instead of a single pre-test and post-test, three baseline WPA/WPP assessments may need to be conducted on three separate occasions: before, at the midpoint, and after VCT training. Post-VCT session assessments can also be scheduled following each VCT module to provide data regarding the effects of each training module. The trainer should rate each post-session WPA/WPP assessment immediately after VCT training before planning subsequent activities. Gradual improvement in quality and quantity of behaviors should be apparent across the VCT modules. Review sessions may be needed if behavior levels are not keeping pace with module content.

THE WORK PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (WPA)

Features of the Measure

The WPA is a brief, cost effective work simulation that is administered in a private space where no interruptions will occur by a test administrator trained in the use of WPA procedures. WPA can be used during the evaluation phase of a student/rehabilitation client's program or across all phases of client/student programs:

1. In conjunction with the WPP as a baseline for comparison to identify behavioral change.
2. At the beginning, mid-point and completion of work adjustment training to document progress, justify funding, and identify assets to use in resumes or during placement activities.
3. Following competitive employment to document performance at three weeks, three months and six months before case closure.
4. Following supported employment to guide job coaching activities and document the on-going need for funding of these services.

Introduced in the context of sorting common food items, nineteen work performance demands are presented by a test administrator role-playing a work supervisor. To increase the probability of a standardized delivery, the WPA administration instructions contain precise details for presenting each of the nineteen demands.

Although similar to a traditional work sample in appearance (sorting food service items), the WPA does not evaluate specific vocational skills. It assesses the quality and quantity of critical work performance behaviors.
To preserve reliability of the measure, standardization of these activities is the responsibility of the test administrator. The administrator may change the mode of presenting instructions to accommodate test participants (e.g. learning disabled, blind, deaf). However, they must precisely and accurately convey each item according to instructions in the manual. The Demonstration Video for WPA Administrators shows how to present work demands in a standardized manner.

WPA was designed to test two participants simultaneously. In programs where groups of clients/students are admitted regularly, it may be most efficient to conduct group WPA administrations (four to six participants). In order to administer the WPA to a single individual participant, a staff member will need to role-play the coworker.

Overview of Target Behaviors

WPA activities are designed to assess work performance across the following seven categories:

1. Preparation: Starting the work day
2. Initiation: Starting work tasks
3. Persistence: Staying on task
4. Feedback: Handling compliments and criticisms
5. Changing: Switching to new activities
6. Cooperation: Dividing parts of a task
7. Communication: Socializing appropriately

Across these categories, nineteen work demands are presented using precisely defined items to measure the performance of 83 behaviors required to enact the work demand. Examination of items in the WPA test booklet reveals the precision with which these 83 behaviors are defined. WPA activities are designed to stimulate performance of each behaviors. An item tally is the first step in contrasting the number of behaviors an individual actually performs to the total of 83 items. Computation of the fraction and percentage identify the proportion of behaviors that are present. This global measure of work performance can be diagnosed by examining which of the 83 behaviors were absent. These items become behavioral objectives to address in training.

Creating the Test Environment

WPA should be conducted in a work-like setting where no interruptions or distractions will occur. The room should not be one in which the test participants have previously had interactions. The test environment will need three separate areas. The entry/role-taking area will need seating for participants waiting to take the test, visual separation from the work area, and sufficient space for the test administrator to address participants briefly prior to entering the testing room. The work area will need a table with space for up to six work stations, straight backed chairs for each work station, a test administrator's desk and chair facing the work station table, and a table for test materials. The break area will need opportunities to sit together or separately and several small tables and chairs.

Test Materials

WPA work tasks involve sorting common food service items to elicit the critical behaviors associated with work performance. A variety of tasks and materials were field tested for sorting. Sorting tasks require the moderate level of activity and attention needed to reveal critical behaviors and can be enacted by most individuals. Common food service items were found to be effective. The quantity and type of food service items needed to administer the WPA to two test participants is listed in the manual. The test administrator will also need WPA test booklets, a clock or watch, camera and tripod, and blank videotapes.

Orientation and Training for Test Administrators

The WPA is presented as a real work situation in which test participants are to respond as if the test administrator were a real work supervisor. The administrator follows a detailed script designed to present stimuli which will elicit

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the critical work performance behaviors in a reliable and valid manner. Only limited variation is permissible in the administration of assessment stimuli if reliability is to be preserved. As long as the test administrator's procedures do not vary significantly and their approach is standardized, valuable and useful information will be obtained. Orientation and training of test administrators should involve the following:

1. Becoming thoroughly familiar with all procedures
    A. Read the WPA Administration Instructions
    B. Watch the Demonstration Video for WPA Administrators

2. Role-play the entire process until the routine proceeds smoothly
    A. Set up the testing room, organize test materials and video camera
    B. Coordinate with staff providing briefing and debriefing
    C. Present introduction to participants
    D. Administer each of the 19 work demands
    E. Dismiss participants to debriefing
    F. Complete ratings, compute the percent of behaviors present

During orientation and training, administrators learn that WPA should not be a punitive experience for test participants; if possible, it should be a positive one. Test administrators learn to adopt a pleasant but neutral demeanor (e.g., eye contact, positive words) that is appropriate for a work supervisor. Should a participant be extremely anxious, the test administrator will apply good judgment to achieve a balance between being realistically supervisory in demeanor and increasing the participant's anxiety beyond tolerance. There may also be some uncertainty about the role-play situation. For example, a participant may interject, "How long do I have to do this?". The administrator's answer should guide the participant back into the worker role (i.e., "Try to work as quickly as you can. Try to be neat and accurate"). A participant may ask "Am I supposed to pretend I've had a job before?" The administrator should pause long enough to respond with, "No, pretend you are a worker now" -- then go right on. A pleasant non-supervisory manner should be adopted outside the testing room after the WPA is completed.

Videotaping the Assessment

Use a video camera to record groups of more than two test participants or in situations when more detailed information is needed (e.g., participants with minimal language competency, multiple disabilities, or who function at a lower level). Research indicates that this method of scoring is acceptable. Job coaches and work adjustment trainers can increase the efficiency of their services by viewing the results of the WPA. Individualized instruction is facilitated and on-the-job failures can be avoided. It is also important to emphasize that reliability of test scores can be increased by having both the test administrator and a trained rater score performance from the videotape. In some agencies it may be necessary to obtain written consent before videotaping assessment activities. If this is necessary, the briefing session should include introduction of a consent and release form.

Brief and Debrief Participants

Before engaging in comprehensive observational assessment, the individual must be prepared. Commonly, persons who are disabled have had past experiences where they tested poorly. In contrast to psychometric or work sample approaches, the situational assessment environment places the individual so near the real world of work and the performance criteria to be predicted that failure can be much more threatening. Before testing clients/students need information about how assessment results will be used as well as the relationship between the assessment and their ability to retain a job and acquire promotability potential. Debriefing, following the assessment may be equally important. The reality of the situational assessment in combination with vocational inexperience or low functioning level may require debriefing activities for participants.

Rating and Reporting Performance

Using the WPA test booklet, a total of 83 items are assessed across the nineteen demands. The presence of the targeted behavior in each item is indicated with a check mark. For behaviors that are not present, the item is left blank. A tally of present behaviors is divided by 83 to determine the percent. The tally, the fraction, and the percent are written on the front of the test booklet. WPA findings can facilitate concrete decision making as well as the matching of resources available in a service program. It can be used as documentation by referral sources/requesting personnel of the need for services such as work study, internship, work adjustment training or job coaching. The test booklets and/or videotape will alert instructors and trainers or job coaches to potential performance deficiencies thus saving time and preventing on-the-job problems.

THE WORK PERSONALITY PROFILE (WPP)

Features of the Measure

WPP is a checklist for rating behaviors in comprehensive observational assessment settings. It uses existing work or work-like settings to produce criterion-referenced scores that can be useful in determining (1) the need for training in behaviors associated with job retention and advancement, (2) progress during training, and (3) application of the behaviors after training. This work personality rating instrument can be used wherever work related behavior is occurring (educational and rehabilitation facilities or employment settings).

Work personality attributes include attitudes, values, habits and behaviors that satisfy fundamental work role requirements and are essential to retaining a job and acquiring promotability potential. The concept emerged in the early work of Gellman (1953) and was later expanded by Roessler and Bolton (1983). The resulting measure contained 11 rationally derived primary categories and five factor analyzed secondary categories across 58 items that could be rated in five to ten minutes. This highly efficient approach proved to be resistant to participant test anxiety, social desirability, and/or frustration with the measurement task.

The measure is powerful, efficient and psychometrically sound. The WPP has concurrent validity with widely used aptitude, interest, and personality measures identified substantial relationships between the behavioral categories and cognitive ability. Concurrent correlation was identified between eight of the categories and nine of the aptitudes measured by the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB). Moderate relationships were found with twelve interest areas measured by the United State Employment Service Interest Inventory (USES-II). Virtual independence was found with the sixteen personality traits measured by the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire. In addition, the measure was found to be predictive of general competence during vocational training and completion of vocational training. In fact, four of the eight categories were statistically significant predictors of general vocational competence.

Targeted Behaviors

The WPP identifies functioning levels in the two categories listed below. The manual contains a detailed description of each category.

Primary Categories

1. Acceptance of the Work Role
2. Profits From Instruction/Correction
3. Work Persistence
4. Work Tolerance
5. Amount of Supervision Required
6. Extent Seeks Assistance From Supervisor
7. Degree of Comfort/Anxiety With Supervisor
8. Appropriate Personal Relations With Supervisor
9. Teamwork
10. Ability to Socialize With Coworkers-Workers
11. Social Communication Skills

Secondary Categories

1. Task Orientation
2. Social Skills
3. Work Motivation
4. Work Conformance
5. Personal Presentation

Selecting a Test Environment

The WPP can be used wherever work related behavior is occurring (secondary and postsecondary educational facilities, rehabilitation facilities and employment settings). The 58-item rating form can be completed in 5-10 minutes after observing a participant in a work or work-like setting. Although the WPP can be used in a diagnostic capacity, its major benefit is in monitoring performance at repeated junctures in a variety of settings. The following settings can be used as WPP test environments:

1. During the evaluation phase of rehabilitation or educational programs with results utilized across all phases of programming.
2. Used in conjunction with the WPA as a baseline for comparison to identify behavioral change.
3. At the beginning, mid-point and end of work adjustment training to document acquisition of knowledge and behavior and to use with employers during placement.
4. Following competitive employment to document performance at three weeks, three months and six months.
5. Prior to supported employment to justify services.
6. Prior to supported employment to alert job coaches to assets and limitations that can impact work performance and attitudes of the supervisor and other company personnel.
7. Following supported employment to document the on-going need for funding of these services.

Orienting the Test Administrator

The WPP is administered in work or work-like settings where participants can be observed continuously for a period long enough to identify the presence and quality of the target behaviors. Ratings can be completed by work supervisors, work adjustment trainers, educators, job coaches, rehabilitation professionals and others who have an extended opportunity to observe participants engaged in work activities.

The WPP uses existing work settings and does not require administrators to contrive a test environment. Therefore, orientation and training involves developing familiarity with the rating instrument and profile form. This measure lends itself to a division of labor between raters who complete the 58-item form and support staff who operate WPP software, record scores on the Profile Form, and convey data to the referral source/requesting personnel. Therefore, the following training activities may need to be targeted toward personnel responsible for these two types of responsibilities:

1. Become thoroughly familiar with the WPP Rating Form
    A. Review each of the 58 items
    B. Memorize the four-point rating scale
2. Practice observing and rating individuals who are disabled in work or work-like settings (i.e., in-vivo or videotaped WPA administration).
3. Transfer ratings to computer program or WPP Tally Sheet
4. Use WPP software to compute percentages across primary and secondary categories.
5. Practice transferring percentages and completing the graph on the Profile Form.

Employers, job coaches and others who will be completing ratings but not processing the data will benefit from an orientation to other steps in the process but not need training or practice in completing those steps. The process will be facilitated, however, if employers, job coaches, and others completing ratings are aware of what happens to the ratings before they receive a completed WPP Profile. In like manner, personnel responsible for processing ratings collected by others will benefit from an orientation to rater's responsibilities. They will not need training or practice in watching for targeted behaviors to appear and assessing the quality of the behavior.

Rating Performance

Using the WPP Rating Form a total of 58 items across the sixteen categories are rated as either (1) a problem area that will definitely limit the participant's chances for employment, or (2) performance inconsistent, a potential employability problem, (3) adequate performance, not a particular strength, or (4) a definite strength, an employability asset, or (x) no opportunity to observe the behavior. Copies of the rating form can be photocopied as needed or ordered from the ARTCVR Media Center. WPP ratings can be quickly and accurately scored on an IBM compatible computer. The software is designed to tally scores, calculate the average raw scale score for each behavioral category and print a profile report. Should an IBM compatible computer not be available, the WPP Tally Sheet provides a hand-scoring format.

Preparing Reports

The WPP Profile was designed to convey behavioral category scores and other assessment information needed by the referral source/requesting personnel for accurate interpretation of test results. The left side of the report form contains a definitive list of each behavioral category for referral sources/requesting personnel who may be unfamiliar with the items it measures. The right side is designed to summarize the criterion-referenced scores in each behavioral category. The total possible WPP score is contrasted to the test participant's total score and average score. The report also provides a list of the items most frequently rated 1 - 4. The graphic display visually contrasts assets and limitations. The WPP Profile facilitates concrete decision making as well as the matching of resources available in a service program can be used as documentation by referral sources/requesting personnel of the need for services such as work adjustment training or job coaching. The rating forms will alert work adjustment trainers or job coaches to potential performance deficiencies thus saving time and preventing on-the-job problems. The quick, comprehensive, easily scored features of this measure also make it useful for supervisors in the workplace.

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Greg Prater
Doris Jones
Susan Miller
Susie Gilmore
Robbie Harwood
Charlotte E. Morris
Nancy Badonie
Becky Gilmore
Terri Hall
LaRue Gilmore
Duree Scott
Tamara Joseph
Britt Tallis
Jan Wooll
Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ
Kayenta Unified School District, Kayenta, AZ

TRANSITIONAL CHALLENGES AND STRENGTHS SPECIFIC TO THE NAVAJO NATION

Introduction

Developing transition plans for students in rural areas can be difficult. When trying to develop and implement a transition plan on the rural Navajo Nation some unique challenges are encountered. This informal study was conducted on the Navajo Nation which covers approximately 24,000 square miles and is equivalent in size to the state of West Virginia. Parts of the Navajo Nation are in three states Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico (O'Connell, J.C., Minkler S., Dereshiwsky M., Guy E., Roanhorse T., 1992). It is cradled between the four sacred mountains: Sisnaajiní - Blanca Peak in the East, Dook' o'sliid - San Francisco Peaks in the West, Tsoodzi- Mount Taylor in the South, and Dibé Ni`tsaa - Mount Hesperus in the North. The Navajo Nation is the largest reservation in the United States. However, only about 156,000 Navajo or Diné ("the people" as they call themselves) currently reside on the reservation (Tsosie, 1990).

In many areas the Navajo people speak primarily in their native language with English as their secondary language (Grubbs, C.G., 1993). The traditional philosophy of the Diné is centered around four main areas; thinking, planning, life, and strength. When these areas are balanced and in harmony, the person is said to have Hózhó (In Beauty We Walk) as stated in the following Navajo Blessingway ceremony prayer (Navajo Nation, 1985):

Navajo Prayer
Hózhoogo naasháa doo
Shitsijí hózhoogo naasháa doo
Shikeedeé hózhoogo naasháa doo
T'aa ałtso shinaagoo hózhoogo naasháa doo
Hózhó náhásdlii
In beauty I walk
With beauty before me I walk
With beauty behind me I walk
With beauty above me I walk

With beauty around me I walk
It has become beauty again
It has become beauty again
It has become beauty again
It has become beauty again

This philosophy is an integral factor in teaching, transitioning , protecting, and caring for all the children with disabilities on the Navajo Reservation (Avery, 1995).

Purpose

This paper will address the cultural influences, and the current transitional services available to students in a northwestern part of the Navajo Reservation. As well as having challenges that are unique to the culture, the Navajo face similar challenges that exist in all rural areas, as they attempt to transition their special education students.

Methodology

This informal study was conducted by students taking undergraduate special education teacher training courses in the Rural Special Education Project. With some direction from their instructors, the university students designed, implemented, and assisted in the data analysis of this informal study.

Questions were developed for the surveys and interviews. They were completed by/with school personnel (administrators, teachers), 9th-12th grade students, and parents of students with disabilities. The following questions were asked of:

School Personnel
1. What transitional services are available on the Navajo Nation for your students?
2. What are the advantages of transitional services in this area?
3. What are the disadvantages of providing transitional services in this area?
4. What are the challenges for providing transitional services in this area?
5. Are parents aware of what transitional services their child should be receiving?

Students
1. Do you know what transitional services are?
2. Do you know what transitional services you are receiving?
3. What transitional services are available to you in this area?

Parents
1. Do you know what transitional services are?
2. What transitional services are available on the Navajo Nation for your child?
3. Is your child receiving transitional services?
4. What have been the advantages of transitional services for your child?
5. What are the challenges of obtaining transitional services in this area for your child?

The participants in this informal study include a total of 47 individuals. Thirty of them were Native Americans, 17 were Anglo. There were 15 Administrators from five different school districts, 12 teachers, 10 students from the Kayenta Unified School District (KUSD), and 10

Parents surveyed or interviewed. Thirty-seven individuals completed surveys and 10 were interviewed. Most interviews resulted from some parents not understanding the questions due to being primary Navajo language speakers. After the data were collected responses were grouped according to common themes found throughout each individual item.

Results

The results are reported in the following groups; **School Personnel, Students, and Parents**. The following are the responses by survey/interviews item by item within each group.

School Personnel

Question 1: What transitional services are available on the Navajo Nation for your students?

The most common response indicated that most schools had strong special education programs that emphasized daily living skills and also vocational education was stressed. Many school personnel viewed their schools work study program to be a valuable transition service. (Special Education students are employed by the school system and practice appropriate work habits.)

Question 2: What are the advantages of transitional services in this area?

Many respondents felt that they provided personal and individualized assistance and informed them of funding services after high school. One person commented, " Upon completion of high school or when the individual reaches the age of twenty-two, the school will facilitate an interagency linkage with outside agencies to assist the student and their families and Social Security, DOL, Vocational Rehab, Social Services for funding with post secondary education upon graduation." One individual indicated that successful transition had occurred in some cases because of the small size of the community. They commented, "Everyone knows everyone else and people are supportive of each other."

Question 3: What are the disadvantages of providing transitional services in a rural area?

The following were common themes identified as disadvantages. The lack of jobs in the area, the competition for the jobs is intense. It is difficult to get business involved in the school programs and there are few businesses in the community. Some agencies, organizations and businesses are willing to take students but are unable to pay students and provide adequate training and supervision. The schools and businesses are concerned with insurance and legal liabilities. Lack of transportation was also cited as a disadvantage, many jobs students are prepared for are outside the community and require traveling long distances.

Question 4: What are the challenges for providing transitional services in this area?

The main challenge encountered by school personnel involved communication. The cultural and language barriers can cause problems in planning and implementing transitional programs.

Question 5: Are parents aware of what transitional services their child should be receiving?

Responses about parent awareness of transitional services their child should receive were somewhat mixed. About one half of the school personnel felt that parents were involved and had a good understanding of available services. However, about one half of the respondents indicated that parents were not involved and did not know about the transitional services available. One person stated:

Parents should be involved (and informed) at all levels of their child's educational programming. However, it is difficult for some parents to be fully informed of their rights as a parent of a disabled child due to any number of factors. Some of these factors might include limited English proficiency, which might result in parents being only partially informed of what's provided through the transition IEP. Some maybe fully aware, but choose not to pursue transitional services on their own because of the complex coordination of services.

Students

Question 1: Do you know what transitional services are?

The majority of the students stated that they did not know. Two students said they did know. On stated, "It's like working on something in fast food like Burger King."

Question 2: Do you know what transitional services you are receiving?

Again, most students indicated they did not know. The same two students that said they did know what transition services were in question one said it involved completing a checklist of things in which they were interested.

Question 3: What transitional services are available to you in your area?

The two students that did know about transition listed the following: vocational rehabilitation, social services, school counselors, public health services and job training. The other students did not respond.

Special Note:

After the interview with the students was conducted, another researcher met with the same students. She reported that after explaining transition and giving a few examples most all of the students indicated they were involved in transitional activities.

Parents

Question 1: Do you know what transitional services are?

A few parents indicated they did know what transitional services were and their children were receiving these services. The majority of parents said they did not know about transitional services. Even though one parent that did not understand the term transition, she commented, "I trust school employee's to take care of my daughter from and to school. I believe the school employee's take care of Michelle when she gets on the bus and believe she will return safely home."

Question 2: What transitional services are available on the Navajo Nation for your child?
Question 3: Is your child receiving transitional services? If so what are they?
Question 4: What have been the advantages of transitional services for your child?
Question 5: What are the challenges of obtaining transitional services in this area for your child?

Responses on the remaining items of the interview were either vague or non-existent. The Navajo researchers conducting the interviews and interpreting the questions had the following comments: The parents had difficulty understanding the term or concept of "transition". One researcher indicated that in the Navajo language there may be several terms that can be used to explain a concept like transition. In other words, it was difficult to have a literal translation.

Conclusion

Even though we realize there may be limitations to our study, we do think our results are of interest. In addition to the common problems found in most rural areas, the challenges encountered on the Navajo Nation can be unique. The most interesting findings involved the Navajo language and culture. School personnel indicated that these were the areas (language and culture) that they felt most challenging. The researchers not only verified the same challenges, but experienced them while collecting their data for this study. On a positive note, we feel the school personnel are to be commended for recognizing this problem and for identifying strategies to resolve these challenges.

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Sheila Barnes, Ph.D.,
Debbie Murphy
Robyne Clure
Kelly McClemore
Southeastern Oklahoma State University
Durant, Oklahoma

GETTING STARTED USING TECHNOLOGY TO ADAPT AND MODIFY INSTRUCTION : IDEAS FOR STUDENT TEACHERS AND FIRST YEAR TEACHERS

Technology is promoted everywhere. Television shows have their own web site, computer scanners are found in almost every store's check-out counter, and children are bombarded with the latest video games available on CD. The availability of such a wide array of technology can completely overwhelm novice teachers. On the other hand, familiarity with technology can give a new teacher a sense of empowerment as well as increase their self confidence and feelings of security. Well-informed, technologically literate first-year teachers not only are better equipped to work with the wide variety of children and youth with disabilities in their classrooms, but also, can be the "old-hats" in a particularly complex field of endeavor at their new school site. The task of actually getting started setting up a classroom that integrates technology rather than simply using computers as a reward for good behavior or completed work is a task even experienced teachers have not mastered. By developing goals, objectives, and a well-thought out plan, novice teachers can use technology in the classroom for instruction, classroom management, record keeping, parent contacts, and assessment. The purpose of this paper is to present specific ideas for using a variety of technology and media. These hardware and software presented have been novice-teacher-tested, tried, and incorporated into first year teacher's classrooms.

Getting Started

The following steps should be followed in order to begin to integrate technology into classroom instruction.

1. Define the primary goals you hope to achieve in your classroom during the year.
2. Derive objectives for each goal.
3. Develop a plan to integrate technology into instruction for each objective.
    - a. Brainstorm technology ideas for each objective.
    - b. Survey the environment to determine what hardware and software is already available. Visit demonstration labs, other classrooms, university labs, or vendors to preview software.

c. Determine what hardware and software is available through loan/lending programs, such as regional service centers, or universities. Almost every state has some type of lending library for software and hardware.

d. Gather the hardware and software you are able to borrow or purchase. Make a list of items you would like to have (these can be obtained later through school funds, donations, or grants).

e. Organize your software to make materials as easily accessed and useful as possible.

f. Set up centers. Type easy-to-understand instructions on letter-size paper. Use the computer and large font to type instructions. For young students, use the font,"avant guard" because the ball-and-stick letters are more familiar. Also use picture cues to assist non-readers in understanding the directions. You can screen-print the icons from the computer to provide pictures of the actual icons students will be using.

4. Do it!

Begin using skills you already have and equipment you are familiar with. For example, use audio tape songs to teach days of the month, math facts, Spanish phrases, etc. Learn one piece of computer software at a time. Use the computer software for a variety of purposes, including large group instruction, small group instruction, and independent practice. Explore a variety of ways you can integrate the particular software into instruction. Learn as many features of the software as you find applicable to your objectives, for example, in Clarisworks, use the Calendar, Library of Pictures, fonts, slide view feature, etc.

5. Document and collect data. Record who is using which machines and which hardware is most used. This information is helpful in identified future needs. Grants and donations are easier to obtain if you can document a need with real data.

6. Determine the effectiveness of the technology integration plan. What skills do you wish to learn to use? What would you like to learn in the next year? What would you like to accomplish in the next five years?

Ideas for Using Technology and Media

Using Computers

Most of us think of computers when we think about technology. Computers are wonderful tools to adapt the delivery of instruction and student responses. Instructional delivery can be adapted in several ways. The computer can be used to present information to an entire class using presentation software, brainstorm ideas with the class as a whole, or to model the use of software. In order to use a computer to deliver instruction to the entire class, a system is needed that will allow the entire class to view the computer screen. An overhead projector and LCD panel may be used, however, the projector must be very powerful unless the room is relatively dark. Alternatives for projection are a one-piece system, such as the Lite-Pro from Infocus, or the use of a Video Graphics Adapter (VGA) converter or other converters such as a Radio Frequency (RF) adapter. The converter allows the computer image to be seen on a standard television monitor. The $200-$300 average cost is several thousands dollars less than projection systems.

The computer can also be used by cooperative learning groups (Male, 1994). Pairing cooperative learning strategies with computers has been found to have a number of benefits over individual or competitive computer activities (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 1986). Activities that combine cooperative groups with computer assignments were found to increase achievement on daily assignments, increase performance on tests, and positively affect attitudes towards computers.

Computers are also very effective with individual students. Most students are able to use a computer, even those with limited ability. There are a number of modifications, adaptations, and alternatives available to meet a number of needs. Some modifications include alternative keyboards such as an expanded keyboard, minikeyboard, or keyboard emulator. When determining the type of keyboard a student needs, consider the student's cognitive ability and physical ability. Touch screens and touch windows are useful for students who are unable to use a keyboard. A joystick is useful for students who are unable to use a mouse. Software and hardware is also available for switch access. Switches provide students with severe physical disabilities with a means of operating computers (Church & Glennen, 1992).

Using Word Processors

Word processors are an excellent alternative to computers. Lap top word processors are available for a fraction of the cost of lap top computers. Lap top word processors use standard 3 1/2 inch disks and have most of the same word processing functions found in word processing programs. They provide students with spell check and the ability to cut and paste or delete and add sections.

Using an Audio Tape Recorder

Audio tape recorders are usually readily available. Most teachers already own a small tape player. In addition, most classrooms are equipped with an audio tape player. Audio tapes can be used in a variety of ways to adapt instruction. Music can be used to teach concepts to young children. There are a number of "concept songs" available. In order to make it easier to quickly access a specific song and the accompanying props, make a copy of each song separately on a short-playing tape. Five-minute tapes are available (these are often used as demo tapes by musicians and are relatively inexpensive).

Using Picture Symbols

Picture symbols can be used in a variety of ways to adapt instruction for nonverbal students. Picture symbols to represent favorite books, songs, videotapes, games, and other activities can be used to allow nonverbal children to select an activity they wish to engage in. Picture symbols can also be used to dramatize songs, stories, or plays. Picture cards can be made that represent categories or subjects talked about at circle time or routine daily activities. As students become familiar with the symbols, incorporate them into personal daily calendars and other record-keeping systems to provide visual prompts.

Using a Camera

Several goal and objectives can be accomplished using an inexpensive 35mm camera. The camera can be used to take photographs that can be used in a variety of ways. Pattern books may be devleoped using real photographs. Use photographs of students themselves so that they become the lead character in the stories. Students can also use photographs to illustrate book reports. Slide film can be used to turn stories into a slide show.

Video Camera and VCR

A video camera and VCR can be used to adapt instruction in several ways. First, video tapes can be an alternate form of completing an assignment. Instead of preparing a written report, students can present a video report for a book report, science project, or other similar assignment. Video cameras are a wonderful means of encouraging participation in cooperative groups. Each student in the project can play a character or can operate the camera. Video tapes of classic literature plays can also be used to adapt literature for secondary students who have difficulty reading. Any play that has been made into a movie on video can be used, from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to the *Miracle Worker*. After watching the video once without interuptions, students can rewind and watch portions of the movie for deeper analysis. Students can also read along in the book or published play script.

Ideas for Organizing Material

Color coding materials by academic areas can help easily locate materials. One idea is to use "hang-up" bags to store software. On bright colored paper, type the name of the program and the academic goals/objectives that the program addresses. We have used the following colors:

Reading :	Red
Math :	Magenta
Language/ Written	Lemon

Science	Sun Yellow
Social Studies:	Purple

Place the colored paper with goals/objectives in the hang-up bag along with the software. In a quick glance, software to meet specific goals and objectives can be located. The hang-up bags can be hung from purchased wall or floor racks. Wall racks can be made using curtain rods that extend at least four inches from the wall. Closet shelf brackets are a clever way to increase shelf space and provide a rod to hang bags.

Conclusion

The use of technology can enhance a novice teacher's first-year experience. The tremendous amount of software and hardware available can overwhelm even the most experienced teacher. This paper presented ideas for getting started using technology in a classroom. The steps provided can serve as an action plan. Check off each step as it is completed. Keep in mind that your primary objective is to address the students' needs. Determine the effectiveness of your classroom program and share your results with others!

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1-800 Resources

ABLENET	1-800-322-0956
ACCESS UNLIMITED	1-800-292-5619
BARNEY	1-800-527-4747
BRODERBUND	1-800-521-6263
DON JOHNSTON	1-800-999-4660
EDMARK	1-800-362-2890
EDUCATIONAL SOURCES	1-800-624-2926
HARTLEY	1-800-580-8595
JESANA	1-800-443-4728
LAKESHORE	1-800-421-5354
LAUREATE	1-800-562-6801
MONACO HANG UP BAGS	1-800-448-4877
SUNBURST	1-800-321-7511
PRENTE-ROMICH	1-800-262-1984
PELICAN	1-800-232-2224
SCHOOL VISION	1-800-324-1672
SILO	1-800-342-0295

M. Winston Egan
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT

Joan P. Sebastian
University of Utah
Salt Lake City, UT

QUALITY TELEVISION INSTRUCTION: VIEWS OF ON-SITE RURAL FACILITATORS

Introduction

A critical factor in the success of distance learning experiences for students is the kind of support they receive for their learning (Sherry, 1995). Support for student learning is often provided by local site facilitators or tutors. The role played by the facilitator may vary depending on program demands, but it always involves direct contact with learners that is designed to mediate the learning experience (Thorpe, 1994).

The University of Utah has utilized local site facilitators in the development of the Distance Teacher Preparation program in Special Education. Rural master special education teachers were prepared as site facilitators to assist faculty with several aspects of the teacher preparation program (Sebastian, 1995). During the delivery of video taped courses, facilitators coordinate learning activities, lead class discussions, support students' completion of assignments, communicate with on the campus faculty, and handle other program management issues at the local site. Facilitators also help to contextualize the course content for students as they begin to integrate the information into their teaching practice with students with disabilities. Additionally, facilitators provide teacher trainees with assistance and support in their special education classrooms (Sebastian, Egan, Welch, & Page, 1996).

Recently, distance site facilitators were asked to participate in a focus group discussion designed to help program developers identify critical components of successful television teaching. Program developers felt that because of their unique role in the support of distance course work, facilitators could provide useful insights in terms of effective television teaching. Rural facilitators were invited to the university campus to talk about their experiences with video-based courses (Krueger, 1988). Specifically, they were asked: " What makes a difference in the effectiveness of television instruction?" The focus group interview was transcribed and the following themes were identified: (1) instructional factors, (2) production and technical issues, and (3) the role of the facilitators. In the following discussion each of these themes will be discussed and illustrated.

Instructional factors

Facilitators had a great deal to say about the instructional factors that contribute to the success of telecourses. Their comments and suggestions focused on factors such as hearing and answering questions, instructional pacing, using discussion groups, and other related elements. Each factor will be briefly addressed in the sections that follow:

Hearing and answering questions. It was clear that facilitators want telecourse instructors to repeat questions and comments made by students. Several reasons were given for this suggestion. Often, student questions and comments in studio classrooms were not completely understood by telecourse students. This frequently depended on the microphones used or the distance between the student speaking and the microphone. Nevertheless, facilitators wanted instructors to repeat or paraphrase all comments made by students in the studio classroom. As one facilitator put it, "It makes a difference if the instructor will repeat the questions that students are asking so that we can hear them."

Instructional pacing. Facilitators made several comments about instructional pacing. They were particularly concerned about the time devoted to student discussions, particularly in telecourses delivered via video tape. Facilitators wanted to know if they should "fast forward" these discussion or let them play. Sometimes, playing these discussions produces student boredom. Two facilitators described their views as follows: "The pacing is important, especially if they are going to do a class discussion that we don't need to watch. It is helpful if the instructor says all right we are going to do a 15 minute discussion, and then we can fast forward through that and do the discussion on our own." Another facilitator put it this way, "We are all adults. We do not need as many repetitions. They need to keep moving and say what they need to say."

As a final note to this section, facilitators noted that it was helpful when instructors concluded the classroom discussion with a summary of the major points. This summary helped distance students receive important feedback about the accuracy and completeness of their own discussion. Moreover, facilitators would like to know in advance how much time will be devoted to cooperative learning activities and discussion groups. In this regard, they suggested that these group activities be clearly identified in the telecourse support materials.

Visuals and instructor movement. Facilitators appreciated instructors who use relevant visuals and visually-oriented support materials such as videos, charts, and graphs. They also commented on the importance of instructor movement. "I think some kinds of visual aids are important. I know that it would be difficult with this kind of situation, but sometimes that will motivate or catch the interest of the students because it's sometimes boring just to watch, you know, the professor's face. And that is all you see for two or three hours, and there is very little movement. If he could move to the other side of the room and point to a chart or something, I think that helps keep the attention of the students."

Instructor availability. Often distance students and facilitators needed to communicate with instructors. Facilitators wanted instructors to establish telephone office hours for themselves and students. At the least, facilitators wanted instructors to have phone mail systems that allowed them and their students to leave messages. One facilitator summarized her views in this manner: "It is sometimes difficult to get through to them (instructors) or to get them to call back. . . you end up calling several times and sometimes get an answer, and sometimes you don't." Another facilitator said, "I did mention it to one professor and he suggested calling him at certain hours which was really helpful. If you call me between such and such a time, I'm always in my office at that time, and that seemed to help."

Interaction with the instructor. Facilitators expressed several views about interacting with instructors, particularly real time, live interaction. Even if the live interaction occurred just a few times during the beginning of the course; it seemed to make a big difference for students who had not had the instructor for previous courses. This view was captured in the following statement: "I think interaction both with the professor and within the class and with the facilitator is a key, especially on the classes where the students haven't worked with that professor, live interaction is mandatory." This was the view of several facilitators as they thought about their experiences with their students at a distance. These live interactions could take place on site or through two-way interactive television. Another facilitator put it this way. "You can have the toughest class, but if the teacher had been right there in the room with them to start or at different points in the program, I've noticed the students will work harder than if it is just something strictly over a tape. If there has been no interaction, the students feel like well I don't have to put too much effort into this one. Their attitude is a lot different."

Formation of study groups. Facilitators described the natural formation of study groups within the distance cohort. They believed that these groups played a significant role in the learning that occurred. One facilitator said, "As far as the interactions with the student themselves, they automatically put themselves into study groups. Almost every time, they end up studying together or working on assignments, getting feedback from each other." Specifically, these groups played a crucial role in clarifying student and instructor questions, helping students prepare for exams and assignments, and delivering feedback about the adequacy and accuracy of assignments.

Introductory and subsequent telecourse sessions. Several facilitators spoke about the first session of a telecourse. Many were concerned that too much time was devoted to introducing the studio classroom participants and responding to general questions. These views were mirrored in the following statement: "I hate the introductory class session, because so much of the time is spent answering questions from the studio class and also introducing everybody. Well, we are not dealing with those people. As a group we basically know each other. . . A lot of time I can reduce them down to about a 15 minute session and say see you next week guys." Clearly, the first sessions of each respective telecourse need to be constructed with the distance learner in mind.

Course support materials and interactive presentation guides. Facilitators were supportive of course materials that promoted engagement and "sense making." They liked course materials that helped students remain attentive and engaged. One facilitator described these materials in this way, "Some instructors send out almost an outline for each session, like Session Two, [they identify topics] leaving spaces for students to put their notes." Facilitators appreciated support materials that helped students understand the organization of the course and the assignments that needed to be completed. Additionally, they wanted support materials that matched the various course sessions. " We still get materials that don't match the tapes."

Other concerns were also raised about support materials. Facilitators wanted course materials that were pertinent to the course. In some instances, they felt that some course packets contained materials that were not necessary.

Essential professor behaviors. Facilitators identified several professor behaviors that were crucial to the learning process. The first of these related to articulation. "Some professor are much better at being very articulate and very clear. Their voices are just easier to hear and understand. I don't know if there is any control over that, but maybe if they knew it was important, it make a real difference how they come across on the video."

Other facilitators commented on "instructor nervousness." One facilitator put it this way, "It was good that she said that [she was scared to death], otherwise some of her nervousness would have been distracting, but they [students] were very understanding after she said that.

Production Factors

Facilitators talked about important production and technical attributes of video-based learning programs. These attributes are discussed in the next sections.

Camera work. Facilitators had strong views about what should be seen and portrayed on the screen. For example, when a student in the on-campus classroom studio is speaking or responding to a question, facilitators and their students want to see the individual.

Some instructors used "character generated" materials. These represented the television substitutes for overhead transparencies. In general, facilitators wanted camera operators and directors to provide more time for students at distance to process the character generated materials. The same thing holds true for instructors who used a chalkboard or other devices to convey written or graphical information. One facilitator expressed her views in this way: "The new CGs on the last tapes were really good but if they could leave them up longer that would help my students."

Other facilitators commented about the "shot selection" during the telecourse sessions. They indicated that students enjoyed seeing "cut aways" to students who were in the on-campus class. These "cut aways" provided some visual variety. In this same vein, facilitators noted that students wanted producers to give them a lot of different "looks." Said one facilitator, "It would be nice to have some close ups, some long shots, some different angles, so that you wouldn't always get a straight shot of the instructor."

Visual materials. Facilitators indicated that students really appreciated visually-oriented materials. These materials added interest to the presentation or lecture and often increased students' motivations for attending. In also gave students a break from the "talking head" perspective. Also, facilitators wanted instructors and the technical personnel to work as a team in displaying or bringing up visuals and related written materials.

Microphones and audio elements. Several facilitators spoke about the importance of hearing student comments and questions. Often because of the placement of microphones or the type of microphone used in studio classrooms, students at a distance did not hear what was being said or asked. Facilitators recommend that all comments and questions be repeated or at least paraphrased by instructors. This repeating or paraphrasing really "made a difference" in how distance students felt about telecourse sessions in which considerable dialogue occurred between the instructor and studio classroom students.

Role of Facilitators

An important theme that emerged from the analysis of the focus groups was information related to the role of the facilitator. Facilitators identified a number of their own behaviors which should be developed to support television instruction. They discussed three aspects of the role of distance facilitator. First they talked about how they supported the instructor and course activities, particularly in relation to maintaining ongoing communication with the campus instructor. They also talked about student support and how that was related to student success with the course and program. Finally they talked about ways to provide training and assistance to facilitators.

Support for course and instructor. Facilitators indicated that they needed to be very knowledgeable about the overall course content and specific material covered by each class session. By previewing the taped sessions before class, facilitators were able to anticipate questions and allow time for discussion. As one facilitator noted, "I find myself doing a lot of clarifying. They [students] will ask, 'now what was that or what did he mean by that?', so I do quite a bit..."

Facilitators were also able to help students apply course content to actual situations in the rural school district. "Sometimes too, depending on the class, it is helpful for us to be able to put the tape on pause for a moment and relate the point the professor just made to how we do it in our district. What does this mean for our site?" In this way, facilitators served as "localizers" for course content and special education practices.

Facilitators also served as an important liaison between the faculty member on campus and the students. They called instructors for clarification on issues discussed by the distance class and for instructions on assignments. Facilitators reported occasional difficulty reaching campus faculty. To alleviate this problem some faculty set up "telephone" office hours that helped facilitate communication between the distance site and campus. Voice mail messages were also used to relay questions and concerns from the distance cohort to the professor.

Student support. Supporting students was identified by facilitators as a very important aspect of their role. Learning at a distance is challenging at best, and students need ready access to someone who can answer questions, assist with assignments, and maybe most important in the view of these facilitators, provide encouragement. "...they [students] will call you up and say I'm really having a hard time with this assignment, I know I can do it but I would like to talk about it..." Facilitators also provided structure in terms of schedules, meeting time, assignment time lines and due dates for the taped class sessions. Facilitators also noted the importance of study groups outside of the class time. Distance students participating in the program as a cohort often established their own study groups which provided another avenue of support.

Facilitator training and support. Facilitators talked about several things that helped them succeed in their role. Communication between the course facilitator and the campus professor was seen as critical. Sometimes facilitators need clarification about something that was said in class and other times it might be related to the assignments. Providing detailed instructors for facilitators in the "facilitator packet" provided with the course materials was viewed as very helpful. Also, instructors need to provide distance site facilitators with instructions about how to grade assignments. This might be in the form of answer keys or model assignments. As one facilitator noted facilitator could provide, "maybe a little bit more guideline on some of these more...subjective aspects of correcting papers." Facilitators also appreciated having the opportunity to come to campus to meet faculty and discuss courses they would be facilitating. Training designed to assist them as they work with adult learners was also appreciated.

Summary

According to facilitators quality instruction is an amalgamation of interactive elements. It begins with knowledgeable, skilled, well prepared, and engaging instructors. It is contingent on meaningful collaboration with other support personnel, including instructional designers, camera operators, directors, producers, graphic artists, and others who contribute to the technical and production aspects of the televised course. And finally, quality television instruction is supported by well trained and knowledgeable facilitators who are very familiar with the course content, who clearly understand the expectations of the instructors, and who related well with learners individually and in small groups.

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Sheila Barnes, Ph.D.
Southeastern Oklahoma State University
Durant, Oklahoma

INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA INTO REGULAR CLASSROOMS TO FACILITATE INCLUSION: PRESERVICE/INSERVICE TRAINING OF RURAL EDUCATORS

A clear preference for educating students with disabilities in the regular classroom has been a requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) since its inception as the Education for all Handicapped Children Act (EHA) in 1975. For years it seemed that the burden fell on students with disabilities to prove that they could adapt to the regular class environment. More recently, it appears that the burden of making adaptations in the regular classroom has shifted from the children with disabilities to their local school district. Technology and media hold great potential for providing a means of making the adaptations and modifications so that students with disabilities can be fully integrated into regular classrooms. This has created a need for all teachers to become skilled in the integration of technology and media into regular classrooms, which in turn has resulted in an increased need for training at the preservice and inservice levels (Northrup & Little, 1996).

Both preservice and inservice teacher training has often failed to prepare teachers to integrate technology into classroom teaching practices (Northrup & Little, 1996; Roblyer, 1994). Lack of training at the preservice level exacerbates the obstacles faced by teachers in rural schools as they attempt to use technology in their classrooms. Once a teacher is employed in a rural school district, the extreme isolation of many rural schools restricts opportunities to participate in training at the inservice level. Many rural school districts are several hours away from a university, therefore, higher education coursework is difficult to obtain. In addition, rural school districts often have limited funds to support travel to conferences and workshops (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1991). Often, even when teachers do manage to attend university classes, workshops, or conferences to receive training in technology, they find that once they return to their classrooms, there are limited opportunities to practice skills learned because the available technology is outdated. In the rare instances in which technology is actually procurable, teachers find technical support is not available in remote rural areas when they experience trouble with the equipment or software.

This paper describes a program to assuage the problem that many rural schools face: inadequately trained teachers who are ill-prepared to integrate technology into instruction and as a result, are unable to effectively make adaptations and modifications for students with disabilities in regular classroom placements. The program was developed for undergraduate students seeking certification in special education and for regular educators employed in rural school districts. The purpose of the project was to develop regular and special educators' competencies in providing quality education to students with disabilities in regular classroom placements within rural school districts.This paper will focus on the specific activities related to training in the integration of technology and media into classroom instruction to facilitate inclusion of students with disabilities within regular classroom settings.

Project F.I.R.S.T. Training

Project F.I.R.S.T. (Field-based Integrated Regular and Special Teacher) Training was a program funded through a state of Oklahoma competitive grant using IDEA-B Discretionary Funds. The funds provided preservice/inservice training in how to collaboratively develop adaptations and modifications for students with disabilities within regular classrooms using technology and media. The inservice training was provided to regular educators currently employed in rural school districts. Teachers were selected through an application process. To be eligible, applicants had to be certified as regular educators and currently employed as regular educators. Only those who had not previously taken undergraduate or graduate work towards certification in special education were selected. The teachers received graduate credit towards a master's degree in special education, however, they were asked to make a commitment to educate students with disabilities within a regular classroom setting for at least three years following the completion of the project. Preservice training was provided to undergraduate students received undergraduate credit for courses which counted towards certification in special education.

Competencies

Participants were provided with opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in adaptations and modifications using technology and media. The knowledge base competencies covered the following topics :

1. Options for adapting classroom organization using technology and media
2. Techniques for modifying student response variables and requirements using technology and media
3 Techniques for applying behavior principles to master cognitive tasks
4. Methods of modifying instructional delivery using technology and media
5. Methods of using technology and media to adapt materials

6. Curriculum alternatives and supplements for students with disabilities that utilize technology and media
7. Methods of using technology and media to adapt or modify tests, exams, or other evaluations of students with disabilities.

Throughout the project, students had opportunities to develop and demonstrate skills in adaptations and modifications including the following:

1. Selecting, adapting, and using strategies and materials according to learner characteristics
2. Developing and/or selecting assessment measures sensitive to cultural differences
3. Choosing and using appropriate technologies to accomplish instructional objectives
4. Teaching students strategies to promote success in the regular classroom
5. Collaboratively developing IEPS and lesson plans.
6. Communicating and consulting with students, parents, teachers, and other personnel
7. Fostering respectful and beneficial relationships between families and others
8. Encouraging and assisting families to become active participants in the educational team
9. Collaboratively planning and conducting a conference for parents and primary caregivers.

Activities and Projects

Activities and projects were completed by each team collaboratively. The teams consisted of the regular classroom teacher employed by the district, a special education preservice teacher paired with the classroom teacher for the entire year, and a university faculty member certified in special education. Together, team members collaborated to integrate technology and media into the classroom. Each team was loaned technology and media hardware and software to use in the classroom for the year. Examples of devices included computers with CD-ROM, lap top computer with projection system (VGA converter or LCD panel) video laser disk player with computer and software to develop instruction using the laser disks, audio tapes and audio tape players, video tapes and video tape player, overhead projector and transparent manipulatives and materials, and augmentative communication devices. One day a month, the project director provided on-site demonstrations of the devices and demonstrations of the integration of technology and media into classroom instruction in order to meet academic goals and objectives.

The teams were taught to select adaptations and modifications from an array of possibilities. For example, technology and media were used to modify organization of the classroom, methods of delivering instruction, instructional materials, and student outputs or response modes. The adaptations and modifications were unique to the grade levels taught, the needs of the students with disabilities within each classroom, and the interests of preferences of each team member.

Portfolio. Throughout Project F.I.R.S.T. Training, participating teams documented mastery of competency skills by collecting artifacts and products in a portfolio. The portfolio included photographs, lessons plans, examples of student work, and other examples of skills that had been mastered. The portfolio was used to assess teams and to evaluate the project. Each portfolio included:

- Photographs of adapted materials and strategies using a variety of technology and media (from no-tech to high-tech) accompanied by a brief typed description of the adaptation and purpose
- Examples of modified worksheets
- Examples (screenprint) of software
- Video tape of students using adaptations and modifications
- Examples of audio tapes used to adapt materials
- Photographs of students employing strategies for success
  Written directions accompanied by audio or video tape
- Examples of student's products and artifacts developed using technology and media

Multimedia Presentation. In addition to the portfolio, each team developed and presented a multimedia demonstration of sample modifications and adaptations for each of the types of adaptations learned. The teams were required to make the presentation using a computer and a projection system (most typically an LCD panel and overhead projector). Teams were encouraged to integrate other media into their presentation such as slides or video tape, transparencies, and handouts. The types of adaptations and modifications were grouped into categories using the mnemonic device known as *ORBITSPACE* . At least one example from each of the following areas of *ORBITSPACE* was provided:

O = Organization of group/classroom
R = Response variables and requirements
B = Behavior management and learning principles
I = Instructional delivery
T = Technology and media
S = Specialized strategies
P = Pacing

A = Adapated and modified materials
C = Curriculum alternatives
E = Evaluation modifications

Parent Perspectives Conference. In order to demonstrate the skills related to relationships with parents, the participants worked together to plan, develop, and conduct a Parent Perspectives Conference. Each team was given a specific task to complete in order to conduct the conference. These tasks included selecting and notifying speakers, determining an agenda, procuring a facility, disseminating information region-wide, obtaining "goody-bag" items from community agencies and business, prepare and serve refreshments, and acknowledging speakers and supporters. Some project participants who were parents of students with disabilities also served as panelists themselves. The teams used technology and media to carry out many of these activities, such as disseminate information, make presentations, and acknowledge speakers and supporters.

Benefits of the Project

Several benefits of the project were reported by the project participants. First, all teachers reported that the opportunity to receive graduate training and inservice directly in their own classrooms was a immense benefit. Second, the participants reported that the field-based demonstrations and loan of the technology increased their knowledge of technology. The majority of the project participants reported that they were familiar with computers prior to the project, however, only one participant was familiar with video disks and no participants had used video disks in their classroom. None of the participants were familiar with presentation software and were unaware of how this software could be used to present information to students. In fact, none of the participants had used technology in whole-class instruction, large group instruction, or small-group instruction. The project director demonstrated the use of this technology during lecture to the participants as well as during instruction within the regular classrooms. A third benefit of the project was that participants reported an increase in the use of technology in the classroom. Prior to the project, only one participant used computers to deliver instruction and integrated computers into classroom activities. During the project, participants were required to integrate technology on a daily basis. Participants reported that the opportunity to observe the project director use computers to meet academic goals and objectives completely changed their perceptions of how technology can be integrated into the classroom. A follow-up six months after the project completion date indicated that participants continued to integrate technology in their classroom and use computers to deliver instruction, modify student responses, and to meet academic goals. Over fifty percent of the project's participating teachers have written grants to obtain computers and word processors. The grants have included computers for use by both the teachers and their students. One grant has already been funded. Status of the remaining grant applications is pending.

Conclusion

The integration of technology and media into regular classroom instruction has tremendous potential to facilitate the successful inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classroom settings. Field-based teacher training can make a significant contribution to the integration of technology into classrooms. By providing modeling and demonstrations within the classroom followed by guided practice, participants will be able to receive technical assistance with the technology as well as assistance with adaptation and modification strategies being practiced. When teachers not only are able to see the impact technology can make, but also have actual technological devices for use in classrooms, they can independently practice what they have been taught. Repeated on-site visits by university faculty provides opportunities for feedback once skills have been acquired and fluency has been developed and provides sufficient time for skills to be maintained and generalized.

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Jozi De Leon
Beverley Argus-Calvo
New Mexico State University
Las, Cruces, New Mexico

A Model Program for Identifying Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Rural Gifted and Talented Students

The identification of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students as gifted and the development of programs that are culturally relevant has been complex and problematic. In the identification process assessment tools that have been traditionally used with mainstream students have not been effective in pinpointing the exceptional abilities of CLD students. In a National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDE) document, Harry (1994), reported that African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students continue to be underrepresented in the gifted and talented category nationally and within several states studied.

According to the Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1988, the gifted are defined as children and youth who demonstrate evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, or abilities in specific academic fields. While it is indicated that giftedness can manifest itself in a number of areas, public school programs have predominantly identified the gifted in academic and cognitive areas. Few programs have been established in these settings for students who demonstrate giftedness in nonacademic areas, especially in rural settings. This has left CLD and mainstream students who demonstrate giftedness in nonacademic areas out of gifted programs that could develop their talents to their fullest potential. This article focuses on a model program designed to identify and develop a culturally relevant visual arts gifted and talented program for Hispanic and Native American students in two rural schools.

The Arts as Essential

"Art plays and integral role in civilizing a society and its members. If introduced early and incorporated regularly into instruction, art teaches us about our capacity to communicate ideas and feelings in a variety of modes and media; to analyze data through analogy and illustration; to accept compromise, ambiguity, and difference as positive human traits; and to construct ethical standards of judgment and action. Works of art tell us where we have been, indicate where we are, and leave evidence for future generations to examine for their own education, enlightenment, and delight. Art is amazingly inclusive with it existence as an uninhibited entity in societies" (Godfrey, 1992 p.596)

Education in the arts has the potential to produce collective and individual civility by provoking a curiosity that legitimizes, extends, and illuminates existence. The visual arts can develop both individuality and the capability to think clearly, to criticize premises, to speculate on assumptions, and to reason through deduction (Whitehead in Godfrey, 1993). School districts which have incorporated arts in their curriculum and added art teachers have also demonstrated improved scores on standardized test (e.g. Sampson County, North Carolina; Profiles of high school students compiled by the College Board (1987, 1988, and 1989; National Center for Education Statistics).

Education of the arts can also help achieve a number of the national education goals for the year 2000. As stated by Hanna (1992), the arts can help retain students in school and improve the high school graduation rate, the arts can promote student achievement in challenging subject matter, and the arts can foster a disciplined environment. Goals of art education include problem solving, higher order-thinking skills, risk-taking, teamwork, and creativity, which can also be viewed in terms of the U.S. competitiveness in the world economy (Hanna).

CLD Students and the Arts

The visual arts can develop both individuality and the capability to think clearly, to criticize, to speculate on assumptions, and to reason through deduction (Whitehead in Godfrey, 1993). As stated by Hanna (1992) education in the arts has the power to do and be many things - to be intrinsically valuable and to help fulfill nonaesthetic, utilitarian goals. Evidence through several studies and projects have demonstrated surprising academic improvements in students whom otherwise might be considered "failures in school". School districts which have incorporated arts in their curriculum and added arts teachers have also demonstrated improved scores on standardized tests (e.g. Sampson County, North Carolina; Profiles of high school students compiled by the College Board 1987, 1988, and 1989; National Center for Education Statistics).

Identification of Rural Gifted in the Arts

In rural areas the challenge to identify culturally and linguistically diverse students as gifted and to provide culturally relevant programs that enhance exceptional skills in nonacademic areas is even greater. Personnel that come from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds may be limited or nonexistent. In addition, the likelihood is greater that identification procedures and programs will focus on academic areas due to the limited types of programs available. Rural communities often do not have the same resources that urban areas might in visual or performing arts. While rural communities may view visual and performing arts as important, there may not be the resources in the community to support such endeavors. Schools reflect the makeup of the communities and often in rural school districts, arts programs are the first to be eliminated. Even when schools support the arts rural gifted students will need to travel to the city to study and enhance their knowledge of the arts.

Rationale for Using a Multidimensional Approach

Identification of exceptional abilities in the arts can be just as problematic as other areas of giftedness if traditional standardized measures are used which do not include culturally and linguistically diverse children and youth in representative numbers. As noted by Spicker, Southern, and Davis (1987) identification standards that rely heavily on standardized tests tend to underidentify gifted students from traditional rural areas. Typically, in schools, children are expected to respond in a few narrow forms when attempting to demonstrate their grasp of a subject; through answers on a test or perhaps an essay (Goldberg, 1992). Student's artwork can provide them an opportunity to demonstrate understanding and *how* they understand specific concepts. Artwork is meant as the artistic expression in any medium: music, poetry, drawing, painting, dance, fiction, sculpture, photography, and so on (Goldberg. 1992). "Expanding notions of assessments to incorporate the possibilities offered by the arts can create exciting opportunities for teachers and learners. As many teachers seek to reflect our multicultural society in the subject matter they present and in the questions they explore. Teachers and learners bring with them to school a great variety of cultures, experiences, and histories. They also bring with them varied methods of expression. By restricting students to traditional ways of expression - and thus to traditional means of evaluation- teachers may be preventing these students from fully working with and displaying their knowledge. By widening their vision of acceptable expression and ways of knowing, teachers can begin to create a community in which students have the essential freedom to learn" (Goldberg, 1992, p. 623).

The identification of gifted and talented students primarily is accomplished using teacher recommendations supported by standardized achievement and group or individually administered intelligence test scores (Aamidor & Spicker, 1995). However, many students who demonstrate behavioral characteristics that do not *please* their teachers or who perform poorly on tests may be overlooked for gifted and talented programs.

Theoretical foundations of The Model Program

The Model Program was developed to primarily meet the needs of under-represented groups of children from rural communities in gifted and talented school programs. The two sites selected were rural and had a predominant Native American or Hispanic student population. Both schools were typical in their identification of gifted and talented students in that they relied on traditional methods of assessment and the programs was directed toward the academically gifted. Despite the majority of culturally and linguistically diverse students in the schools, these students represented the minority in programs for the gifted and talented.

When The Model Program was first proposed, several goals were established for the program. One goal was to develop methods of assessment that went beyond traditional methods which relied on standardized instruments. Cultural sensitivity as well as their appropriateness in the identification of talent in the arts was of utmost importance. In addition, a second goal was to develop a differentiated visual arts curriculum, instructional strategies and opportunities appropriate for rural, undeserved, ethnically diverse, gifted and talented students. In working towards this goal, the program relied upon the expertise and experience of the director, teachers, parents, and students to develop and test visual arts identification procedures and curricula appropriate for each community and culture served.

Sites

The two schools chosen to serve as project sites were rural, agricultural, economically disadvantaged, and had substantial numbers of culturally diverse student populations. Both schools were located in the northern part of New Mexico on the east side of the Rio Grande. Many of the people make all or part of their livelihood as artisans making jewlry, pottery, moccasins, and beaded handwork. The people of The Pueblp, helping perserve those traditions practiced by remaining in and serving theri community. The other school prides itself on its strong bilingual language program, academic enrichment programs, and sports programs available for students.

During the three year period of implementing the program, three different phases were developed. Thh first phase consisted of developing alternative identification and selection procedures of students to be participants in the project. The second phase focused on developing a differentiated curriculum for each site that met the cultural and individual needs of the student populations. The thrid phase focused on the continuation of adapting the curriculum to the students and final evaluation of the project. The focus of the rest of this paper will focus on the identification process.

Identification Process

Individual assessments developed by the school sites

The primary goal for the initial implementation of the program was for schools to develop the procedures for the identification of gifted and talented students in the visual arts. Identification Committees were established and were comprised of parents, teachers, artists, and administrators. It was the goal of each school to establish procedures for student identification based on methods which were sensitive to the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic differences of and ethnic identity inherent in their community. In order to increase the possibility that no student would go unidentified, multiple methods were utilized to ensure that equal opportunities in the selection process were used.

One of the first steps in the process was to gather teachers and others who would be involved in the identification and have them begin to examine giftedness in visual arts from a local community and cultural perspective. Several days were spent brainstorming and discussing how talent in art manifested itself in the community. In addition, participants came up with a list of characteristics that would indicate talent in different types of visual arts (Those characteristics were later used to develop different surveys for the nomination and identification process.).

The identification procedures utilized multiple methods in order to increase the likelihood that students form a wide range of backgrounds (e.g., economic, social) would have equal opportunity in the selection process. A process similar to the Pentegonal Implicit Approach outlined by Sternberg and Zhang (1995) was used. Schools used parent nominations, teacher nominations, peer nominations, self-nominations, art samples, artists recommendations, and art shows as their criteria.

Parent Nomination Forms. Parent Nomination Forms were sent home with students. This form consisted of questions which dealt with their son's/daughter's work habits, hobbies and interests in art.

Teacher Survey. Identification of students was also done through the use of teacher recommendations. Teacher recommendations were obtained through formal and informal methods. Formal recommendations consisted of teachers filling out a Teacher Survey which dealt with the identification of children by asking teachers to assess students interest in art and other creative abilities. Personal contact with the site coordinator as an informal means in which to obtain recommendations. Discussions were held between the site coordinator and classroom teachers regarding individual students. In all cased, the teachers could also write their students' recommendations down and submit them to the site coordinator.

Peer Identification. Students were asked to identify peers on the Peer Nomination Form who exhibited artistic and creative ability as specified in items on the nomination form. Student responses provided a basis for a pool of students' names that could be discussed with classroom teachers and parents.

Self-Nomination. Self-nominations were another method utilized in the identification of students who were possibly gifted and talented in the creative arts. Students were asked to fill out a Self-Inventory Form which consisted of a questionnaire intended to assess a student's interest in art and other creative activities.

Art Show. An art show was scheduled during the Fall semester and students who were interested in the program and in showcasing their work were asked to participate. Community artist judged each piece of art using a 5-point likert type scale. The artists judged the artwork based on originality, technique, composition, uniqueness, and movement. Judges tallied scores and identified students based on consensual judge agreement. These recommendations from the judges were compared with the nomination forms and previous selection processes. Possibly students who were gifted and talented in the he visual arts saw this as a motivation activity.

Indian Student Creativity Behavior Checklist. Teachers were asked to fill out the Indian Student Creativity Behavior Checklist on all students enrolled in grades 3-5. This checklist asked questions pertinent to general creative ability in a variety of areas (e.g., writing and thought). Scoring was done on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from (1) never to (5) always.

Student Self-Nomination Form. Students who were interested in participating in The Model Program had an opportunity to nominated themselves via the Student Self-Nomination Form. This gave the students a chance to indicate what their interest were, how often they engaged in art activities, and their overall artistic awareness.

Teacher Assessment Form. One of the Identification Committee Members, acted as the Native American Art Consultant. He is a graduate of the "American Indian Institute of Art" as well as being a professional painter and jewelry maker. A native of The Pueblo, this consultant is active in the community and is a successful role model for the students. He completed the Teacher Assistant Form on each child in grades 3-5. He would sit in on art classes and observe the children during their art lesson and fill our the form after approximately four observations. Brief narratives were documented based on his professional observations relative to the students artwork. Students were also scored on a 5-point likert type scale on questions dealing with the tribal/cultural perspectives.

Gifted Talented Rating Scale. Copies of the Gifted Talented Rating Scale were distributed to classroom teachers for their nomination of students' participation in the program. This survey evaluated students' potential qualifications based on a 5 point scale ranking Personal Human Qualities and Aesthetic Qualities.

Portfolios. In order to assess the students individual art work, Portfolio assessment was used throughout the project. Both teachers and students were able to study a student's growth, mastery of art media and techniques, and ability to explore and express ideas and feelings through art. The use of portfolios was considered important because they (a) focus on a child's own abilities rather than comparing children's abilities; (b) measure individual student growth over time through comparisons of works of art; (c) provides the student with ownership; (d) encourages collective assessment by teachers and students; (e) focus upon student strengths, not weaknesses; and (f) builds self esteem through successes.

Portfolio assessment involves the student in the evaluation process. Asking students to talk about their art, to explain their ideas, their choices and materials, and their use of design elements and principles, is an important part of the process. Comparing and contrasting works enables the student to see growth and new achievements. Discussion between teacher and student also stresses the importance of the process of art-making and the ideas behind a work of art, rather than placing all emphasis on the final product.

Student work sample portfolios were beginning to be used to identify students who displayed talent in the visual arts. Portfolios consisted of classroom art samples created during the first portion of the school year. Classroom teachers and the Native American Art Consultant reviewed the students' artwork, identifying those students who showed talent. A professional artist was invited to demonstrate to the students how portfolios are used.

Formal Assessments. Both the Clark's Test of Drawing Ability and Torrance's Test of Creativity were administered during the first year of the program. Although both test appeared to be culturally sensitive and fair, they were found to be culturally biased against the Pueblo students. One of the teachers noted that children were at a disadvantage when such tasks as drawing a house were evaluated on the basis of details like shutters, landscaping, and dormer windows. Housing in the Pueblo feature single-story, flat-roofed adobe houses in grassless clusters separated from a few straggly trees near a creek-width river. It would be very difficult to score either test fairly. Although results were questionable the drawings were used as part of the portfolios developed in the screening process.

Effectiveness of the Identification and Selection Procedures

Once the identification procedures had been established and implemented, the Identification Committee members were interviewed individually. The most effective method for effectively selecting the gifted and talented students was the cross-referencing of the art consultant's independent recommendations with the classroom teachers' recommendation along with the students' recommendations and the art show. The students in both schools, appeared to be very aware and accurate in assessing their own abilities relative to the visual arts. These students also participated in the art show, suggesting that those students who were motivated to create, enjoyed the prospect of entering a competition, and had talent, entered their art in the show. One of the most important factors that had to be considered throughout the identification process was the need to respect the tribal and local customs of the community, therefore reflecting the importance of having representatives of the community in the Identification Committee's.

Teacher nominations were considered moderately successful as a concern was voiced by one of the committee members that this method was too subjective. Peer nominations also assisted in the identification of students for the program. However, teachers reported that some students nominated peers based on likability or popularity, or may not have understood the purpose of the peer nominations.

Overall Outcomes

The model program met several of the goals that were initially proposed. One of the goals addressed the need to develop modified procedures and materials to help teachers, as well as parents and community members in the identification, education, and evaluation of rural gifted and talented arts students from diverse populations. This goal was met by the development of multifaceted identification procedures that did not rely on the use of standardized test or focusing on academic achievement. Community members and parents were involved in the process, as well as local artist.

Another goal of the project was to establish and provide a differentiated visual and performing arts curriculum appropriate for rural, underserved, ethnically diverse, gifted and talented students in the identified states. In New Mexico, this project allowed for the establishment of the first arts education program in the state in four years, and the only formal art program for the Pueblo in the public school. The developed curricula by each site were culturally specific and could be easily incorporated by any elementary school teacher.

Personal student triumphs

Along with the overall establishment of alternative identification methods and development of the differentiated curriculum, personal student triumphs are important to address. Overall students who participated in the project had the opportunity to work and learn from the experiences of local artists. A major urban newspaper previewed the program and included pieces of the students artwork. During the art exhibit held at the opening of the Church, students had the opportunity to sell their artwork and actually keep their earnings. Students who participated demonstrated improved motivation and self-esteem, especially for some students who had been described as having been behavior problems but "turned around" as a direct result of their involvement and achievements in the project. One particular student was offered a position at local advertising agency. Students developed long distance friendships by the cross-site pen-pals that they kept. This activity was enhanced by the tele-conference that was held in which the students actually got to speak-to each-other and meet on the screen.

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Catherine Medina, Ph.D.
Northern Arizona University
Center for Excellence in Education
Flagstaff, Arizona 86011-5775
catherine.medina@nau.edu

Substance Abuse Among Rural Mexican American Students Identified as Seriously Emotionally Disturbed.

Introduction

Johnson (1988) reported that large numbers of chemically dependent students have been identified as behavior disordered or emotionally disturbed resulting in an increase in the number of referrals for special education services. Johnson also reported that the use of substances, in any quantity, may affect adolescents behaviorally as well as physically and mentally, with some adolescents exhibiting deficiencies in perceptual-motor coordination and visual-spatial skills due to the effects of chemicals. Fisher and Harrison (1992) found that chemically abusive students referred for special education programs in the public schools often exhibited many of the following behaviors: (a) antisocial behavior, (b) hyperactivity, (c) academic failure, (d) lack of commitment to school, (e) alienation, (f) rebelliousness, and (g) lack of social bonding to society. Problems associated with substance abuse among adolescents also include increased deviance, sexual activity, suicide attempts, depression, and general lack of responsibility (Ralph & Morgan, 1991). These same behavioral characteristics are often prevalent in adolescents who are referred to special programs for emotional disturbances/behavior disorders. Thus, the identification of at risk adolescents for substance abuse or emotional/behavioral problems becomes an arduous process. Taking these facts into consideration, it seems reasonable to expect that school districts would address substance abuse and chemical dependency screening as routine.

Purpose of the Presentation

The purpose of this presentation is to share the findings of two studies which explored chemical use among youth, ages 13 -18, enrolled in classes for serious emotional disturbances (SED). In the first study, the Personal Experience Screening Questionnaire (PESQ; Winters, 1991) was administered to 31 adolescents, primarily Mexican American, residing in rural communities and enrolled in classrooms for SED to determine if they were at-risk for chemical abuse. In the second study, 29 urban students enrolled in classes for SED were administered the PESQ to determine if they were at-risk for substance abuse. A comparison of these two populations (rural vs. urban) were made.

Rural Youth

In the first study, the prevalence of chemical abuse among predominately rural Mexican American adolescents enrolled in 1 of 6 rural public school classrooms for SED were explored qualitatively and quantitatively. The PESQ was administered to 31

Mexican American adolescents placed in classrooms for SED. The PESQ is a standardized assessment instrument designed specifically for adolescent populations between the ages of 12-18 years. It contains 38 items which elicits responses intended to assist the evaluator in identifying students who are *possibly* at-risk for chemical dependency. Prior to the questionnaire administration, the students were each told the purpose of the study, the means by which confidentiality would be maintained, and that only the primary researcher would have access to the questionnaire data.

Results indicated that 10 of the 31 participants may be at-risk for substance abuse/chemical dependency. Of the 5 females only 1 (20%) female scored in a range which would indicate problem use of chemicals. Of the 26 male students, 9 (33%) scored in a range which would indicate problem use. Total computation of scores indicate that 31% of the females and males in special education placements for SED were in need of more comprehensive assessment for chemical abuse.

Results of the PESQ also indicate that psychosocial stressors were prevalent among special education students who scored in the problem range for chemical abuse (n = 10). Of these special education students abusing chemicals, 60% reported being depressed, 40% reported having suicidal thoughts, 70% reported feelings of anxiety, 60% reported somatic complaints, 70% reported there was something wrong with the way their mind worked, 20% reported they were hit by family members, and 10% reported having been sexually abused by a family member.

Rural special education students enrolled in classes for SED and not abusing chemicals (n = 21) appeared to have similar psychosocial problems as those special education students who were abusing chemicals (n = 10): 24% reported depression, 33% reported having suicidal thoughts, 45% reported feelings of anxiety, 36% reported somatic complaints, 29% reported there was something wrong with the way their mind worked, and 19% reported they were hit by family members, 5% reported having been sexually abused by a family member. A summary of findings relative to psychosocial stressors revealed rural students enrolled in classes for SED and abusing chemicals had higher percentage scores in all areas of psychosocial stressors.

Urban Youth Comparison

In the second study, students (N=29) from two urban middle schools and one urban high school located in the southwest region of the United States and serving high percentages of Mexican American youth were asked to participate in a study intended to assess the prevalence and extent of chemical abuse among students identified as SED. Students were asked to fill out the PESQ during their regularly scheduled school counseling time. Prior to the questionnaire administration, the students were each told the purpose of the study, the means by which confidentiality would be maintained, and that only the primary researcher would have access to the questionnaire data. All students vounteered to participate.

Results of the PESQ indicate that special education students placed in classes for

SED may be at risk for chemical dependency. Of the 6 female students, 50% scored in the moderate to critical range, indicating possible chemical dependency. Of the male students (n = 23), 35% scored in the moderate to critical range. Total computation of male and female scores indicte that 38% of special education students needed further assessment in the area of chemical abuse.

Results of the PESQ also indicate that psychosocial stressors were prevalent among special education students who scored in the moderate to critical range for chemical abuse (n = 11). Of these special education students abusing chemicals, 45% reported being depressed, 27% reported having suicidal thoughts, 45% reported feelings of anxiety, 27% reported somatic complaints, 36% reported there was something wrong or unusual with the way their mind worked, 55% reported they were hit by family members, and 9% reported having been sexually abused by a family member.

Special education students enrolled in classes for SED and who did not score in the moderate to critical range for chemical use (n = 18) appeared to have similar psychosocial problems as those special education students who were abusing chemicals: 32% reported depression, 21% reported having suicidal thoughts, 63% reported feelings of anxiety, 32% reported somatic complaints, 32% reported there was something wrong or unusual with the way their mind worked, and 11% reported they were hit by family members. No student in this category reported having been sexually abused by a family member.

A summary of findings revealed students abusing chemicals had higher percentage scores in the areas of depression and suicidal thoughts. Over half of these participants reported having been hit by family members and 9% reported having been sexually abused by a family member. The adolescents not abusing chemicals had higher percentage in only two areas, anxiety and somatic complaints. Overall, both groups reported problems in psychosocial areas.

Summary

Given that nearly 1/3 of the 32 rural students and over 1/3 of the 29 urban students reported abusing chemicals, it is interesting to note that none of these students received any type of intervention for their chemical abuse. In all cases, students abusing chemicals reported that they did not relay to teachers or parents their chemical abuse. Since the behavioral characteristics often associated with chemical abuse also mirrors those often associated with serious emotional disturbances, it appears necessary to screen students for possible chemical abuse prior to their placement in special education. It is evident that special education students identified as SED are abusing chemicals in significant numbers without the benefit of appropriate interventions. It becomes questionable as to whether students receiving special education services for severe emotional disturbances are in fact emotionally disturbed or possibly chemically dependent.

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